

ASPIRING ENTREPRENEURS FROM KENYA, SOUTH
AFRICA, AND UGANDA: NEW MEDIA USE AND
CULTURAL PERCEPTIONS

By

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Title of Study: ASPIRING ENTREPRENEURS FROM KENYA, SOUTH AFRICA,
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Abstract: The population for this study was the 12 emerging entrepreneurs from the countries of Kenya, South Africa and Uganda who were part of an *Entrepreneur Fellows*’ two-way exchange program. The study assessed perceptions of the Entrepreneur Fellows’ regarding new media platforms prior to the program, following the program, the culture of the United States, the benefits and challenges of participating in an international internship/job shadowing experience, and the training experiences that resonated with the Fellows’ regarding their professional roles. A mixed methods analysis was used to examine the phenomenon prior to the program and the post program interview. Based on the questionnaire, the Fellows’ preferred Facebook and Pinterest the most, but the Fellows had never heard of the Pinterest and Flickr platforms. Based on the interviews, the Fellows’ gained a better understanding of the possibilities of new media outlets but faced the challenges of cost, as well as availability and lack of knowledge in their enterprises. While in the United States, the Fellows had an overall positive opinion of the program and were grateful for their internship placements. The Fellows’ traveled back to Africa empowered by the project with beliefs they could make a difference in their countries, especially in regard to empowering aspiring entrepreneurs for economic success.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

New media technologies have started a revolution among social networking sites. Smith (2009) declared that, “[t]hese sites are the tip of redefinition of how the Internet works, with every site now incorporating the feature that allows users to publish opinions, connect, build community, or produce and share content (p. 559).

The growth of websites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and Pinterest have shaped the *new way* people and businesses communicate and share information across the world (Indrpati & Henari, 2012). Indrpati and Henari (2012) said, “This is a huge socio-economic shift that is changing the way consumers and companies communicate and interact with each other” (p. 48).

Just as the adoption of computers and the Internet took off in the 1990s (Rogers, 2003), new media is continuing to grow at an extreme rate (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Along with the rapid rates of adoption, Internet and new media platforms have changed the way individuals seek and receive information, outdating traditional marketing strategies (Indrpati & Henari, 2012).

With the growth of new media, geographical boundaries are no longer an issue. Shirazi (2013) stated, “[s]ocial media tools available via the Internet have provided web-users across the globe effective tools and services to share and disseminate information” (p. 28). Okazaki and

Taylor (2013) echoed that statement by stating, “[w]ith the growth of new media, relationships have expanded over much larger geographical boundaries than ever before.” With the expansion of new media, developing countries are on the forefront of the technology era. Media has gone mainstream in Africa with both individuals and small- and medium-sized businesses embracing the available platforms (Van Rjjswijck, 2011). However, according to Rogers (2003), the adoption of platforms can be determined and/or restricted by several factors, such as socioeconomic status, personal variables, and communication behaviors.

According to Juma (2011): “the development of small- and medium-sized enterprises has been an integral part of the development of all industrialized economies. This holds true in Africa” (pp. 142-143). With the help of emerging technologies, small- and medium-sized enterprises are embracing the capabilities of new media platforms and raising the digital entrepreneurship scene in Africa (Drouillard, Taverner, Williamson, & Harris, 2014, p. 2).

As small- and medium-sized enterprises expand, so do the opportunities for growth and interaction across borders using new media tools. But Moss (2007) offered a different opinion, “it is also clear that local businesses, especially budding entrepreneurs, face considerable barriers” (p. 235). Ingle (1986) also explained, “it was often mentioned by the less industrialized nations that applications of the indicated technology were on a very limited and/or trial basis. Countries of the Third World face an increasing handicap in terms of applying any new information media” (p. 257). These concerns hold true for social media and small and medium-sized enterprises in developing countries (Dlodlo & Dhurup, 2013).

Juma (2011) declared: “[o]ne critical starting point is “knowledge prospecting,” which involves identifying existing technologies and using them to create new businesses. African countries have so far been too isolated to benefit from the global stock of technical knowledge (p. 144).

The issue with struggling small- and medium-sized businesses and their involvement with new media in developing countries led faculty members at Oklahoma State University to develop a grant proposal (see Appendix A) focused on professional and educational learning experiences for aspiring entrepreneurs from Kenya, South Africa, and Uganda (see Figure 1). This project focused on acquiring entrepreneurial skills while sustaining U.S. mentor contact through new media. Participants were selected based on recruiting efforts emphasized on “the selection of women and individuals who are disabled with recruitment target that 50% of the Entrepreneur Fellows be derived from historically marginalized groups in Kenya, South Africa, and Uganda” (“Empowering Aspiring Entrepreneurs,” 2013, p. 6).



Figure 1: Map of Africa. The map highlights the home countries of Fellows’ in the United States training program: Kenya, South Africa, and Uganda.

When knowledge is not linked to business development, it is the most important challenge facing agriculture in east African countries (Juma, 2011, p. 142). The *Empowering Aspiring Entrepreneurs* project aimed to “recognize the significance and potential for agribusiness development and its impact on the economic livelihoods of millions of rural Africans and their communities” (“Empowering Aspiring Entrepreneurs,” 2013 p. 3).

The grant-funded project, supported by the United States Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, was implemented as a four-phase process. Two phases of the project allowed for seven Kenyans, eight South Africans and eight Ugandans to travel to the United States for a five-week, professional and educational development experience. Twelve Fellows’ traveled during May 2014, and the remaining eleven Fellows’ traveled during October 2014. Only the first round of Fellows’ participated in this study. During the Fellows’ stay in Oklahoma, they received in-depth training in enterprise development, entrepreneurial undertakings and new media and digital platforms (“Empowering Aspiring Entrepreneurs,” 2013).

As noted in the grant proposal,

[o]pportunities for experiential learning and practice, as well as the potential for creating new perceptions or “personal theories” and modifying pre-existing ones, will be powerful tools to support the learning of the Fellows’ as they acquire and practice new professional behaviors and competencies related to economic empowerment (“Empowering Aspiring Entrepreneurs,” 2013, p. 14).

As part of the project, the participants traveled to a Professional Fellows’ Congress in Washington, D.C., hosted by the Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. The project also included phases where two groups of Oklahoma State University

faculty, internship mentors, and other colleagues traveled to Kenya, South Africa, and Uganda to visit the entrepreneurial enterprises and to evaluate the implementation of knowledge and skills during the U.S. training program (“Empowering Aspiring Entrepreneurs,” 2013).

The main component of the U.S. portion of the program was a 15-day internship. During the internship in the United States, Fellows’ worked in a business or organization similar to their career aspirations or desired work settings in Kenya, South African, and Uganda. For example, a founder of an educational foundation in South Africa interned at the Oklahoma Department of Education as well as Meridian Technology Center. A director of a gluten-free food company interned at HOPE Food Science and Oklahoma State University’s Food and Agricultural Products Center.

The internship/job shadowing experiences were the primary focus of the program because, according to Fredrick (2012), “internships are a central component of experiential education or learning-by-doing” (p. 69). This approach allowed the Fellows’ to gain real-world experiences, which they could apply to their entrepreneurial aspirations, and to learn about the advantages of new media in small- and medium-sized enterprises as practiced in the United States.

To date, the perceptions of entrepreneurs using new media tools in developing countries has not been a heavily researched topic, and as a result, a very limited number of cross-national or cross-cultural studies have been conducted (Okazaki and Taylor, 2013). Okazaki and Taylor (2013) described the lack of international studies involving social media as a “glaring hole.” They concluded that, “cross-cultural studies are badly needed” (p. 68) to expand knowledge about new media advertising across international markets.

Problem

The amount of research available regarding the adoption of new media tools in small- and medium-sized entrepreneurial enterprises in developing countries is limited. Shirazi (2013) analyzed the role of social media and the recent popularity in the Middle East and North African countries. Jagongo and Kinyua (2013) discussed the effect of social media on the growth of small- and medium-sized enterprises in Nairobi, Kenya. However, a substantial lack of research information exists in regard to the perceptions of people who travel to the United States for educational and professional exchange programs, especially aspiring entrepreneurs. To generate future opportunities for aspiring entrepreneurs, additional research and information is needed to create a foundation for benefits, challenges, and perceptions of the uses of new media tools by enterprise developers in developing countries.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to describe the perceptions of selected Entrepreneur Fellows' from Kenya, South Africa, and Uganda regarding their experiences with the digital media training they received in the United States, the culture of the United States, their internship/job shadowing experiences, and the group activities during the grant-funded exchange program in which they participated.

Research Objectives

The study included the six research objectives:

1. Describe the personal and professional characteristics (sex, age, and country of residence) of the African Entrepreneur Fellows.
2. Identify digital media use of African Entrepreneur Fellows prior to the U.S. training program.

3. Identify digital media use of African Entrepreneur Fellows six months after the U.S. training program.
4. Determine African Entrepreneur Fellows perceived barriers to adoption of new media tools following the U.S. training program.
5. Describe the African Entrepreneur Fellows perceptions of U.S. culture.
6. Determine African Entrepreneur Fellows perceptions of the training program received in the United States.

Scope

The study included the following scope:

The scope of the study was the 12 Entrepreneur Fellows' who participated in the first round of the U.S. training program.

Limitations

The study included the four limitations:

1. The generalizability of this study is limited to Kenyan, South African, and Ugandan Entrepreneur Fellows' who participated in the U.S. training program conducted by the faculty at Oklahoma State University during 2014.
2. The study used a pre-questionnaire and post interview as the data collection method. The results are limited to the honesty and willingness of the 12 Fellows who participated in the training program.
3. The chance for error existed when transcribing the data as the Fellows' interviews were conducted via Skype, and Fellows' often were hard to understand.
4. Some limitations occurred because only 10 of the 12 Fellows' participated in the post-interview process.

Definition of Terms

Apps – “an application, typically a small, specialized program downloaded onto mobile devices” (“Apps,” 2015, as cited in Dictionary.com).

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs – a unit of the Public Affairs division of the U.S. Department of State. The bureau “works to build friendly, peaceful relations between people of the United States and the people of other countries” (“Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs”, para. 1).

Developing countries – “majority of population lives on far less money;” i.e., low-income (\$1,035) and middle-income (\$1,035-\$4,086) economies (WordBank, 2014).

Entrepreneur – “a person who organizes and manages any enterprise, especially a business, usually with considerable initiative and risk” (“Entrepreneur” 2005, as cited in Dictionary.com).

Entrepreneur Fellow – entrepreneurial professionals from Kenya, South Africa, and Uganda who participated in The U.S. Department of State grant-funded project at Oklahoma State University (“Empowering Aspiring Entrepreneurs,” 2013).

Internship/Mentorship – work experience designed for students to learn while gaining real-world experience influential by a teacher or counselor (Green, 1997).

New media – “products and services that provide information or entertainment using computers or the Internet, and not by traditional methods such as television and newspapers” (“new media” 2015, as cited in CambridgeDictionariesOnline.com).

Oklahoma State University – formally known as Oklahoma A&M College, OSU was founded in 1890 under the Morrill Act as a land-grant university. OSU is located in Stillwater, Oklahoma (Oklahoma State University, 2013).

Small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) – “are non-subsidary, independent firms which employ fewer than a given number of employees. This number varies across countries. Some countries set the limit at 200 employees, while in the United States considers SMEs to include firms with fewer than 500 employees” (“small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)” 2005, as cited in OECD Glossary of Statistical Terms).

Social media – “forms of electronic communication (as Web sites for social networking and microblogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (as videos)” (“social media” 2015, as cited in Merriam-Webster Dictionaries).

Web 2.0 – Second generation of Internet-based applications (Okazaki & Taylor, 2013).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter provides a review of the significant literature that contributed to this research study, including: Social Media to New Media and Web 2.0, Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprises, Technology in Developing Countries, Entrepreneurship in Developing Countries, Benefits of Higher Education Internships, Value of Cultural Exchange Programs, and Theoretical Framework: Diffusion of Innovations.

Social Media to New Media

Social media, as it falls under the category of information and web-based communication, is intended to link individuals to other users and businesses in a successful way (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Dating back to 1979, the establishment of social networking was founded when Bruce and Susan Abelson founded “Open Diary.” This social networking site served as an online writing source for diary writers (Kaplan & Haenlin, 2010). The launch was the first use of blogging online. This, in turn, contributed to the growing spark of social media. In 1997, sixdegrees.com was the first social media site launched to allow users to create profiles, organize groups, and invite friends (Boyd & Ellison, 2007; Goble, 2012). After the first launch of social networks in 1997, roughly 40 social media sites have been launched defining a social media revolution (Goble, 2012). During the span of social media’s exorbitant growth, social media outlets have allowed users to extend outreach to friends, distant family, and even potential employers (Boyd &

Ellison, 2007).

Smith (2009) stated, “[s]ocial media has inspired an environment where sharing opinions and content through the web is fun, meaningful, and rewarding” (p. 560). Described as the information age or the age of technology, media is changing the way people interact. The phenomenon of social media provides a variety of outlets to different users. Many described social media as an outlet to allow users to publicly share, connect, and produce content among themselves (Jagongo & Kinyua, 2013; Yzer & Southwell 2008).

Meti (2014) stated:

Over the last few years, the web has fundamentally shifted towards user-driven technologies such as blogs, social networks, and video-sharing platforms. Collectively, these social technologies have enabled a revolution in user-generated content, global community, and the publishing of consumer opinion, now uniformly tagged as social media. This movement is dominating the way we use the Internet and leading social platforms like Facebook, MySpace, YouTube, and Twitter have moved into the mainstream. These sites are the tip of a redefinition of how the Internet works, with every site now incorporating the features that allow users to publish opinions, connect, build a community, or produce and share content (p. 2).

According to statistics from PewResearch in 2013, 71% of adults used Facebook, 18% used Twitter, 17% used Instagram, 21% used Pinterest, and 22% used LinkedIn. The growth of social media is not limited to teenagers and younger generations (Duggan & Smith, 2013). Members known as “Generation X,” ages 33 to 44 years old, are continuously increasing the population of social media outlets (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

Smith (2009) discussed the revolution of social media and the effect it has taken on society and a variety of different age groups.

This social revolution is being felt all around us, even if you are not actively involved in new media. Today if you search for a product, the results are dominated by user content and opinion. This shapes all online users' opinions. Second, our networks of influence are growing and becoming more dominated by strangers as we increasingly socialize in the digital spaces such as Facebook and Twitter, exposing us constantly to a huge volume of consumer influences (p. 559).

Web 2.0

Interchangeable, the terms “new media and Web 2.0” are used in place of “social media” to encompass all communication outlets, including ones without direct person-to-person contact (Barelka, Jeyaraj, & Walinski, 2013). An article published by Beville (1985) revealed the term new media is in fact not new. The term new media was used even in 1985 to describe the drastic movement with technology in television, FM radio, and facsimile. New media and Web 2.0 are terms used more frequently to describe new social networks as a “center on the collaborative content construction activities of users, highlighting their willingness to manipulate information, manage social networks, create and share artistic products, and engage in self-presentation and expression” (Harrison & Barthel, 2009, p. 160).

Many argue a significant difference exists between the terms new media/Web 2.0 and social media. Christopher S. Penn, a popular online blogger, described the difference: “[n]ew media defines new things in a technological sense. It's audio, video, and text publication methods and tools that were previously inaccessible for publication purposes. Social media requires the participation of others” (Penn, 2008, para. 4).

Harrison and Barthel (2009) noted:

Web 2.0 services and applications make possible more dynamic interactions between clients and servers, more engaging webpage displays and application and ultimately more

direct, interactive and participative user-to-user interactions than heretofore experienced on the web. Such interactions are possible because applications enable users with little technical knowledge to construct and share their own media and information products (p. 157).

As a benefit, social networking platforms, as already mentioned, have allowed people to publicly share, connect, and produce content among users (Jagongo & Kinyua, 2013; Yzer & Southwell 2008). Social networking platforms not only enhance personal communication, but also they enhance the capabilities of commercial and business-related ventures. During the last several years, social media has redefined the way businesses have marketed their enterprises through digital marketing (Taneja & Toombs, 2014). This raised questions related to the importance of social networking in the business world in the future, especially for small- and medium-sized businesses.

Social Media in Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprises

Durkin, McGowan, & McKeown (2013) described small- and medium-sized enterprises as being “characterized by the number of unique and important factors which identify them as different from large companies and emphasize the fact that they are not ‘little big businesses’” (p. 718). Media is known as the new face for contact capabilities, but small- and medium-sized enterprises are the new faces for business. Together, social media helps small- and medium-sized businesses in terms of networking, relationships, and online branding (Bulearca & Bulearca, 2010). But according to Roy, Maxwell, & Carson (2014), limited research is available in the area of social media use by small- and medium-sized enterprises.

Roy et al. (2014) said, “small- and medium-sized enterprises represent 99.7% of all employers and employ 49.1% of the private force in the USA” (p. 127). Taneja and Toombs (2014) concluded that since 2008, the number of small businesses using social media has doubled

to create awareness of businesses as well as to attract new customers and enhance branding images (p. 249). Social media networking helps small-business owners promote their businesses and gain visibility, viability, and sustainability to compete in business (Taneja & Toombs, 2014). Media has given small- and medium-sized business owners the power to communicate in the marketplace by allowing one person to establish connections with hundreds, even thousands of potential customers instantly with little to no effort (Mangold & Faulds, 2009, p. 361). With the help of social media, organizations and businesses can now communicate their ideas and views around the world quickly and efficiently (Taneja & Toombs, 2014).

Media has contributed to the global expansion of small- and medium-sized businesses. With this expansion, small- and medium-sized enterprises now play an important economic role in many countries (Bowen, Morara, & Mureithi, 2009).

Technology in Developing Countries

The media impacts people beyond borders in a reality that cannot be ignored (Sabir, 2013). A study analyzing social media acceptance in the developing world, as conducted by Dlodlo and Dhurup (2013) found social media is growing in developing countries at an escalating rate in various entrepreneurial economies. But to date, new media in developing countries has not been a widely researched topic.

In many developing countries, social media comes with limitations. In Africa, consumers face many harsh realities in terms of limited bandwidth, coverage, and electric power (Murugesan, 2013). According to Drouillard et al. (2014), private telecom companies opened a Satellite Earth Station in Nairobi, Kenya, in 2006, and, therefore, laid the foundation for the initial building of 3G networks. Now, utility companies are laying fibre optic cable networks in urban areas. “With higher capacity networks and broader coverage, mobile operators are better positioned to support data intensive digital services” (Drouillard et al., 2014, p. 12). Even though

these networks are becoming more available, mobile devices are relatively expensive (Drouillard et al., 2014). Murugesan (2013) said, “[m]any in Africa can’t afford expensive smartphones; they can only afford low-cost ‘feature’ phones, which have become increasingly popular in the developing world” (p. 8). Murugesan (2013) described feature phones as basic packages that only make and receive calls, send text messages, have limited Internet access, and have the ability to run simple apps. As of 2012, Groupe Special Mobile Association estimates “31 percent of people living in Kenya would have at least one mobile subscription” (as cited in Drouillard et al., 2014). Because of the struggle with Internet access, users looked to apps for communication.

Even with the struggle of Internet availability and broadband power, mobile applications became increasingly popular in developing countries with the help of feature phones. The app ForgetMeNot Africa, a two-way Internet messaging platform allowed users to update Facebook accounts, email, and chat over the Internet using SMS or an app (www.facebook.com/ForgetMeNot-Africa). BiNu, an international software platform now being used in Africa, delivered the option of mobile Internet services to users in developing countries. “Most emerging and developing countries are rapidly becoming mobile-first economies where the primary means of Internet connectivity is via handheld mobile devices using mobile wireless network infrastructure” (Binu, 2014, p. 6). According to Murugesan (2013), the app platform established by software platforms such as BiNu, cater to feature-phone users in Africa and accommodate the bandwidth limitations faced by developing countries. “Users can instantly discover, use, and switch between services, change local languages, and translate almost anything on the fly without having to download and install separate apps” (Murugesan, 2013, p. 8).

As developing countries turn to mobile phones for online services, many platforms not only helped communication but also assisted with livelihood and economic improvement (Murugesan, 2013). VMK, a technology platform in the Congo, developed an app to translate overseas store purchases, as many did not accept credit facilities from the Congo (Murugesan,

2013). M-Pesa, a popular mobile banking transfer application helped with day-to-day banking in Africa (Murugesan, 2013). M-Pesa accounted for 80% of global mobile transactions (Shapshak, 2012). Ma3Racer, a game similar to Angry Birds, has more than 840,000 downloads since it was launched in 2011 (Shapshak, 2012). Even an agriculture app, iCow, has been launched to monitor the gestation period of dairy cows (Shapshak, 2012).

Technology has started to expand further in developing countries, and children in Africa have begun to see the first stages of digital technology expansion. Nonprofit organization Worldreader gave children access to digital books (Murugesan, 2013). E-readers allowed children to access thousands of e-books across the world (Murugesan, 2013).

Media technology has not only empowered people in developing countries, but also it has changed business, personal and educational aspects across the world. With the help of mobile technology, both developed and developing countries are enabling the creation and growth of the digital economy (Drouillard et al., 2014). A study by the Mobile Economy Sub-Saharan Africa reported the mobile ecosystem would generate 6.6 million jobs by 2020 (as cited in Drouillard et al., 2014).

Ali (2011) said, “[t]he story of social media in developing nations so far is one of individual empowerment. Social media not only connects deprived nations to the outside world but provide the power to shape the Internet in a way that is relevant to their peoples’ lives, the power to organize in scale, and the power to speak” (p. 219).

Entrepreneurship in Developing Countries

When markets suffer, entrepreneurs still remain. Small- and medium-sized enterprises use gap-filling techniques to respond to market deficits (Acs & Virgill, 2010). Entrepreneurship is becoming increasingly essential due to underdeveloped markets in developing countries because

small- and medium-enterprise entrepreneurs fill important gaps within a market (Leibenstein, 1968). Leibenstein (1968) used an example to prove the importance of entrepreneurship:

Suppose that a small business produced a certain commodity, a certain type of machine has to be employed. If no one in the country produces such a machine and if imports are barred, only entrepreneurs who have access to information on how to construct the machine can enter the industry. The potential entrepreneur has to make up for a market deficiency (p. 73).

In most developing countries, entrepreneurs are pushed into starting a new business because they have no other work options (Amoros & Bosma, 2013). The demographics of business entrepreneurs in Sub-Saharan Africa, according to the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor Global Report by Amoros and Bosma (2013), largely included males, who are 25 to 35 years of age. Even though a majority of entrepreneurs are male, female entrepreneurs are on the rise. In developing countries, a majority of people living in East Asia and Pacific, South Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa fall under the category of low-income (\$1,035) and middle-income (\$1,035 – \$4,086) economies (Word Bank, 2015). Many developing countries looked to productive entrepreneurship to help create jobs, escape poverty and raise living standards (Brixiova, 2011). In agreement, Acs and Virgill (2010) concluded that the poor experiences, as well as a challenging import and export environment lead many developing countries to investigate the role of entrepreneurship and how an entrepreneurial culture could improve their economies.

Leibenstein (1968) said:

Per capita income growth requires shifts from less productive to more productive markets, new organizational forms, the creation of new skills and the accumulation of new knowledge. The entrepreneur serves as a gap-filler and input-completer is probably

the prime mover of the capacity creation part of these elements in the growth process (p. 77).

In support, Juma (2011) affirmed when entrepreneurs create links of business development, knowledge is the most important asset when facing agricultural issues. However, Sriram and Mersha (2010) explained, “developing countries are constrained by scarcity of adequate start-up capital, stiff competition, lack of employees with the right skills and difficulty in finding adequate facilities to start their business” (p. 257). According to Drouillard et al. (2014), one key component that can contribute to a successful system is mobile evolutions, which in recent events have inspired the emergence of a digital entrepreneurship in Kenya. Drouillard et al. (2014) also commented: “[m]obile operators play a central role in the ecosystem and at present only a few startups have managed to secure such partnerships. Nearly all mobile operators are starting to engage with entrepreneurs, through mobile application (app) stores, toolkits and other support mechanisms” (p. 3).

Even as the demand for small- and medium-sized enterprises exists in developing countries and the percent of new jobs created from them are successful, starting and operating small businesses include the possibility of failure (Bowen et al., 2009). Brixiova (2011), however, stressed that, “[i]n Africa, successful entrepreneurship is often associated with mere survival rather than involvement in highly productive activities” (p. 441). A report by GSMA said Nairobi, Kenya, had strong potential to become a strong digital entrepreneurship hub, but technical challenges prevented many entrepreneurs from being successful (as cited in Drouillard et al., 2014). In a study titled *Management of Business Challenges among Small and Micro Enterprises in Nairobi-Kenya*, Bowen et al. (2009) examined the challenges faced by small- and medium-sized enterprises in a developing country. Research found that the top five challenges facing businesses in Nairobi were competition, insecurity, debt collection, lack of working

capital, and power interruptions (Bowen et al., 2009). A study titled *Stimulating Entrepreneurship in Africa*, (Sriram & Mersha, 2010) concluded the following:

While most African entrepreneurs believe that they have the requisite personality factors including passion, energy, and determination needed to start and manage new businesses, aspiring and current entrepreneurs in Africa are constrained by lack of adequate start-up capital, stiff competition, lack of workers with the right skills, and difficulty in finding adequate facilities in a good location (p. 268).

In the book, *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries are Failing and What Can be Done About It*, Collier (2007) described four *traps* that often pervade 58 developing countries. He labeled these nations the “world’s bottom billion” (Collier, 2007, p. 3). These traps include conflicts, the natural resource or Dutch disease, being landlocked with bad neighbors, and bad governance (Collier, 2007). Collier (2007) said, “In every society of the bottom billion there are people working for change, but usually they are defeated by the powerful internal forces stacked against them” (p. 96). However, he also stressed that, “we should be helping the heroes” (p. 96) in these nations.

This literature showed the need to address problems facing Collier’s *heroes* in developing countries. Therefore, this project aimed to help “individuals interested in business-enterprise development, including aspiring and emerging entrepreneurs – for travel to the United States to receive training and participate in internship experiences with business professionals and entrepreneurship educators” (“Empowering Aspiring Entrepreneurs,” 2013, p. 2).

Benefits of Higher Education Mentorships/Internships

The inspiration, teachings, and opportunities created by a good mentor in higher education academia can increase productivity for a mentee (Baerlocher, O’Brien, Newton, Gautam, & Noble, 2011). Darwin and Palmer (2009) explained mentoring in higher education

institutions as an informal or a planned program where mentees are matched with experienced mentors in a formal one-on-one program. Harder, Lamm and Vergot (2010) said, “activities that provide hands-on experiences were considered to be the most important for professional and personal development” (p. 4).

Both individuals, mentor and mentee, in the mentorship relationship, can benefit as it makes it significant and dynamic (Kram & Isabella, 1985). In a study conducted by Rodriguez and Roberts (2011), they explained that students preferred hands-on methods of gaining knowledge rather than traditional classroom settings. Wright and Wright (1987) explained mentoring not only enhances career aspirations, but also can have long-term effects on professional development aspects as well. Internships and mentorships can also increase professional visibility and reputation if mentees are active and professional and gain respect from their peers (Wright & Wright, 1987). Research involving mentorships in higher education have linked mentoring and internships to career advancement (Burke & McKeen, 1997); self-confidence (De Vries, 2005); and personal growth and career satisfaction (Ehrich, Hansford, & Tennent, 2004). Kram and Isabella (1985) stated,

Mentors provide young adults with career-enhancing functions, such as sponsorship, coaching, facilitating exposure and visibility, and offering challenging work or protection. All of which help the younger person to establish a role in the organization, learn the ropes, and prepare for advancement. In providing these functions, an experienced mentor gains technical and psychological support, finds internal satisfaction in enabling a younger colleague to learn how to navigate in the organizational world, and gains respect from colleagues for successfully developing younger talent for the organization” (p. 111).

Although the benefits of mentoring and internship programs are strongly encouraged for student development, the challenge lies with the requirement of matching the mentoring partners, as not everyone qualifies as a mentor and arranged relationships are not always ideal (Darwin and Palmer, 2009). Some mentors may try to mold mentees into his or her own image, which may result in problems in the development of the mentoring relationship (Kram, 1983). Wright and Wright (1987) explained that “[t]he mentor might misjudge the protégé’s potential, and the protégé’s poor performance could reflect negatively on him/her. The protégé could become dependent on the mentor and be unable to perform without the guidance of the mentor” (p. 206). Fury (1979) identified four challenges of mentoring that can be applied to higher education: “(a) the mentor may lose power or influences; (b) the protégé may be limited to one person’s perspective; (c) the mentor could leave the organization; (d) the male mentor may want sexual favors from the female protégé; (e) the protégé could be attached to a poor mentor” (p. 48).

Kram and Isabella (1985) identified the encouragement of mentorships and internship to early careers and to future employers, and Webb, Mayer, Pioche, & Allen (1999) concluded that employers also desire a “diverse educational background” when selecting new employees. Webb et al. (1999) also stated that international internships are the second most important asset of producing employable graduates, second to language training, and a challenge exists for employers hiring people who can communicate efficiently across international borders. Boyle, Nackerd, & Kilpatrick (1999) determined that students need more international experiences rather than the traditional internship experience. However, little has been written about cross-cultural education that utilized experiential learning (Boyle et al., 1999, p. 202).

Value of Cultural Exchange Programs

Before the 1970s, agricultural education and international experiences were not common (Wingenbach, Chmielewski, Smith, Pina Jr, & Hamilton, 2006). Webb, et al. (1999) concluded,

“[g]eneral findings show that American education is behind in terms of the development of international programs, and specifically areas such as language requirement, exchange programs and internships for both students and faculty” (p. 381). According to Collins (2014), cross-cultural exchange programs contribute to social progress and public good, and Zhai (2004) identified cross-cultural interaction as the theme for creating cultural sensitivity among students. However, “little has been written about cross-cultural education that utilized experiential learning” (Boyle et al., 1999, p. 202). According to Holmes and Matthews (1993), even less has been specifically written on international cross-cultural experiences.

Following the events of September 11, 2001, it was recognized that Americans were not mindful of global issues (Collins & Davidson, 2001). “Our nation needs to build and maintain partnerships worldwide, cooperating with other governments with shared interests to achieve the kind of security and quality of life citizens expect” (p. 51).

During the last 20 years, the growth of cross-cultural higher education activities has increased significantly through university partnerships (Collins, 2014). “Partnerships contribute knowledge to region-wide development problems, including water, agriculture, education, health and energy” (Collins, 2014, p. 956). Activities do not include just any kind of higher education, but instead focus on global progress and public good (Collins, 2014).

Globalization, as defined by Kearney (1995), is the “social economic, cultural and demographic processes that take place within nations, but also transcend them, that the attention is not limited to local processes” (p. 548). During the last 30 years, globalization has become a reoccurring trend in the classroom (Wingenbach et al., 2006). Agricultural education programs have recognized the trend and the importance of globalization and have adopted many international components (Wingenbach et al., 2006). Jones and Bjelland (2004) said, “U.S institutions must see opportunities to embrace globalization through learning, scholarship and

engagement” (p. 963). Bruening and Frick (2004) supported the idea that learning in unfamiliar locations produces transparency on global issues. They concluded understanding diversity and global issues help bridge cultural gaps (Bruening & Frick, 2004). The 1982 Florida Task Force (as cited in Ibezim & McCracken, 1994) found this:

Global education can be defined as a process that provides students and individuals with the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for them to meet their responsibilities as citizens of their community, state, and nation in an increasingly interdependent and complex global society (p. 44).

Acker and Scanes (2000) assert that involving students in cultural exchanges could help them gain experiences they need to make progress in seeing how others live, work, and learn. In a recent study by George (2014), who studied Food Security Fellows from Kenya and Uganda in a cultural exchange program, she concluded the Fellows’ were excited to visit the United States, but they had fears of the “language barrier, unfair treatments based on race, and concerns about the arrogance and unhelpfulness of Americans” (p. 69). Following the experience, George (2014) concluded that the Fellows “enjoyed the generosity of Americas and appreciated the willingness of U.S. citizens to help them whenever possible” (p. 70). Suarez (2003) reiterated a similar idea suggesting two-way cultural exchanges help individuals develop their own personal and cultural diversity. Zhai (2004) recognized cross-cultural interactions as the foundation theme for creating cultural awareness and sensitivity among students. “U.S. students’ experience of people who are culturally and linguistically different may teach them cross-cultural skills which are very important in today’s diverse society” (Zhai, 2004, p. 15).

According to Bruening and Shao (2005), experiential learning, presentations, and dialog are the most effective teaching methods when used with students from different countries to allow for new perspectives. Rodriguez & Roberts (2011) determined the best practices for instructors to

follow during international educational experiences were to ensure “course structure, community involvement, extracurricular activities and reflection” (p. 29). This combination will give international participants more of an education opportunity and more interaction with the host culture and people (Rodriguez and Roberts (2011). “Well designed study abroad and cultural exchange programs based on the experiential learning model allow students to build upon knowledge obtained in the classroom by effectively applying it to real-world situations” (Pires, 2000, p. 40).

Jones, Wu and Hargrove (2002) studied students in academic internship experiences and concluded students value “gaining hands-on experiences, opportunities to work on real-world problems, and understanding the significance of teamwork in the workplace” (p.163). George (2014) studied 14 Food Security Fellows from Kenya and Uganda through journal entries and who completed international internships in the United States and found the internship program was the favorite component of their exchange project. “This combination gave the Fellows a solid foundation for impacting food security in their home countries, or so they perceived. Furthermore, the Fellows gained a better understanding of the career-driven focus of people in the United States” (George, 2014, p. 71). One participant even noted, “[t]hese experiences are directly linked to my job. I have a wider understanding from a global perspective” (George, 2014, p. 53).

When individuals partake in a cross-cultural exchange or internship opportunity, they become captivated by new experiences, which can impact their lives in their home countries (Chau, 1990). This literature can be applied to the development necessary for hosting international internship and job shadowing experiences (Bryan & Sprague, 1997).

Theoretical Framework: Diffusion of Innovations

The adoption of new technologies could fall under several theories to examine and explain the nature behind them. One of the leading theories behind the adoption of new innovations and the theoretical base for this research is Rogers' (2003) diffusion of innovations theory.

The idea of diffusion began as a series of scientific groups but has grown into a single idea composed of concepts and generalizations. Gabriel Tarde, a French sociologist who developed the original S-shaped diffusion curve, did early diffusion research. The S-shape curve indicated the rate/pattern of adoption of innovation across time (Rogers, 2003). Tarde said "an individual learns about an innovation by copying someone else's adoption of the innovation" (Rogers, 2003 p. 41). Rogers (2003) defined diffusion as "the process in which an innovation is communicated through certain channels across time among the members of a social system. It is a special type of communication in that the messages are concerned with new ideas" (p. 5).

Rogers (2003) began his study of adoption in his early years as a doctoral student at Iowa State University. While working toward his minor in statistics, Rogers (2003) became discouraged with the idea of the "confusing disarray of terms used for adopter categories" (p. 279). He then began to develop and define his own adoption categories (see Figure 2). The normal frequency is divided into five adoption categories: innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards (Rogers, 2003). The dimensions are measured by the time it takes for an individual to adopt a new innovation. Rogers (2003) applied the concept of standard deviation, means, and normal distribution to explain each of the adoption categories.

During the decision-making process of adopting a new idea or technology, a person makes sequential steps toward a conclusion. Rogers (2003) defined this procedure as the innovation-decision making process (see Figure 3).

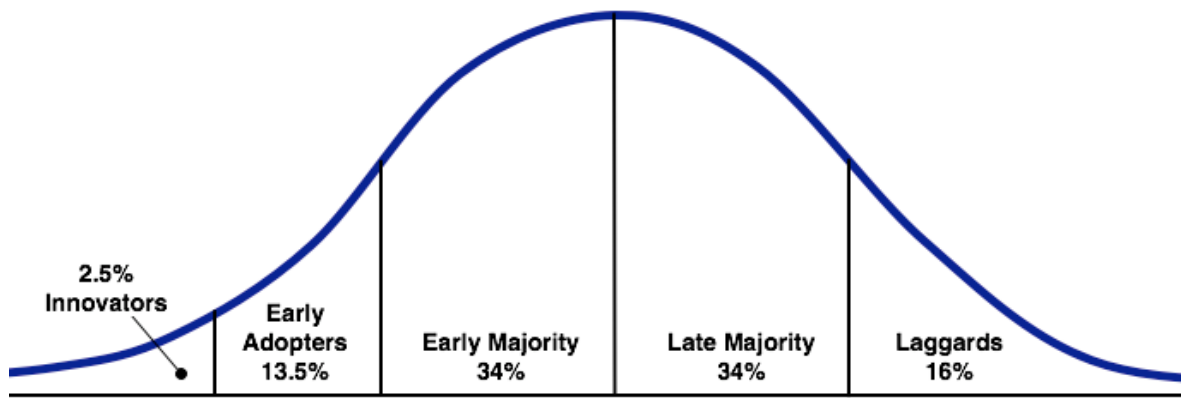


Figure 2. Adopter categorization on the basis of innovativeness. Adapted from *Diffusions of Innovations* (5th ed.), by E.M. Rogers, p 281. Copyright 2003 by E.M. Rogers.

According to Rogers (2003), five steps complete the innovation-decision process: gaining *knowledge* through exposure to an innovation's functions and existence; the *persuasion* or forming an attitude for or against the proposed innovation; the *decision* to accept or reject the innovation; the *implementation* of the new innovation; and *confirmation*, the stage in which an individual pursues support for his or her innovation-decision, including continuance, rejection, or decision resolved.

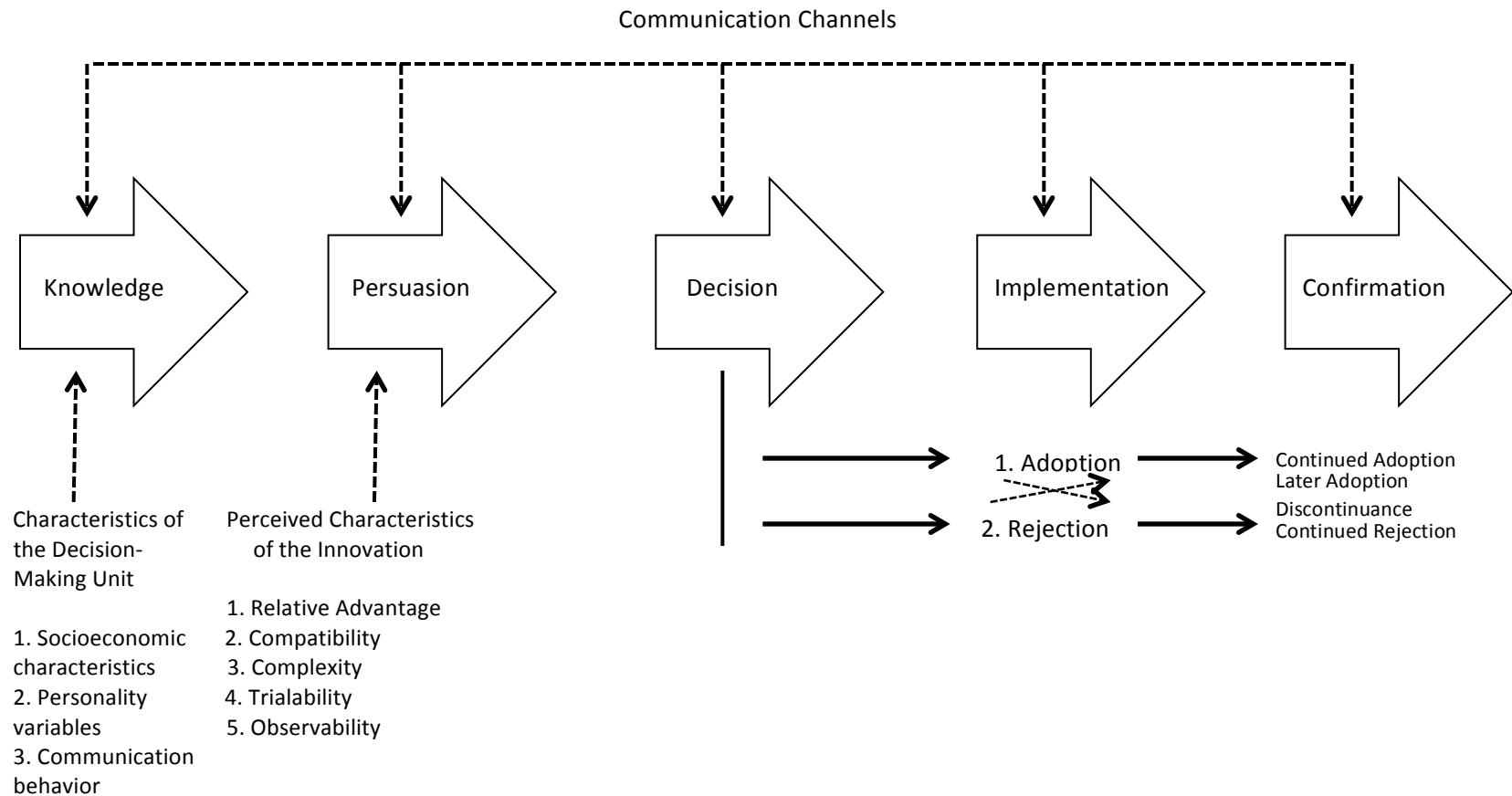
An individual's perceptions of an innovation's attributes can predict the rate of its adoption by members of a social system (Rogers, 2003). This readiness also can affect the combined rate of adoption of a new technology. Rogers (2003) concluded that five attributes of a perceived innovation, largely affected its rate of adoption: relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability (see Figure 4).

Implications for this Study

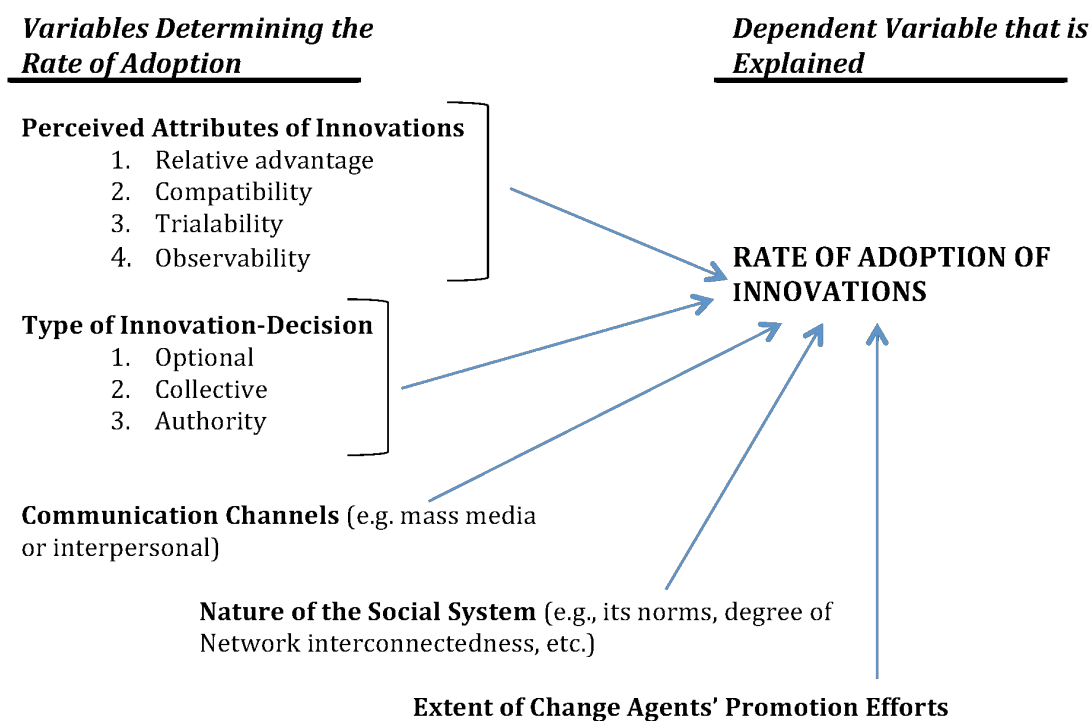
The Entrepreneur Fellows' studied were at various stages in the innovation-decision process regarding the adoption of new media for their entrepreneur enterprises. Prior to the U.S. training program, the Fellows' may have acknowledged the social media technology, but had not

Prior Conditions:

1. Previous practice
2. Felt needs/problems
3. Innovativeness
4. Norms of the social systems



*Figure 3. A model of the five stages in the innovation-decision process. Adapted from *Diffusion of Innovations* (5th ed.), by E.M. Rogers, p. 170. Copyright 2003 by E.M. Rogers.*



*Figure 4. Variables determining the rate of adoption of innovations. Adapted from *Diffusion of Innovations* (5th ed.), by E.M. Rogers, p. 222. Copyright 2003 by E.M. Rogers.*

taken steps to develop an attitude for or against the innovation (i.e., persuasion), decided to adopt or reject a social media tool or even implemented using a social media outlets.

After the training, many of the Fellows' may have developed a social media plan following the five innovation-decision phases (Rogers, 2003) and then decided to further their use or reverse their initial decision based on positive or negative experiences that arose from earlier decisions.

These five attributes also must be considered with the involvement of social media in the agricultural industry. Stated below is each of these attributes as it relates to the adoption of social media by the Entrepreneur Fellows' who participated in this study.

Relative advantage

Expressed in terms of economic profitability and social prestige, Rogers (2003) defined relative advantage as “the degree to which an innovation is perceived as being better than the idea it supersedes” (p. 229).

Social networking sites and other social media technologies are becoming a reliable outlet for sharing information to target audiences in a timely manner (Osatuyi, 2013). A study by Wright State University found individuals adopt social media outlets based on cost (free), easy set up, and convenience (Barelka et al., 2013). Instead of paying a monthly fee for print publications, entrepreneurs could use similar outlets on the Internet free of charge, which would hold relative advantage.

Compatibility

Rogers (2003) stated, “[a]n idea that is more compatible is less uncertain to the potential adopter and fits more closely with the individual’s situation” (p. 240). This portion connects the attribute of compatibility to uncertainty reduction theory. Berger and Calabrese (1975) outlined uncertainty as “the cognitive inability to predict and/or explain our own and other people’s attitudes, feelings, values and behavior” (p. 21). This connection to uncertainty relates to social media tools in several ways. First, an individual may be uncertain if he or she would be able to understand and use social media tools. Uncertainty also may exist in person-to-person interaction through social media communication. In Kraut et al. (1998), researchers argued, unlike the communication of face-to-face interaction or even telephone, the Internet shapes weak opportunities for social interaction with the lack of physical cues. These aspects can contribute to uncertainty of online communication technologies among users. Rogers (2003) stated “[w]hen the issue of equality has been investigated, it has been shown that the diffusion of innovations often

widens the socioeconomic gap between the higher- and lower-socioeconomic status segments in a system” (p. 130).

Complexity.

Regarding the complexity of an innovation, Rogers (2003) defined the attribute as the level of difficulty in using a new innovation or idea; it is negatively related to an innovation’s rate of adoption. The perception of complexity can be applied to many different scenarios. According to Miyazaki, K., & Kijima, K. (2000), complexity is a negative influence against decision/strategy making situations associated with a variety of interest but, more specifically, technology. The perception of complexity may constrain individuals from adopting social media, as they are usually already content with more traditional methods of communication or may perceive the innovation is too difficult for them to use (Rogers, 2003).

Trialability.

Trialability denotes an idea that can offer an individual an experimental test to determine if the innovation works under his or her own conditions. If an individual decides not to adopt the innovation, only a relatively small amount of time may be lost. This attribute of an innovation is particularly important for early adopters because it reduces uncertainty that may reduce the likelihood of adoption (Rogers, 2003). The availability of computer or Internet use may be a crucial obstacle, which could prevent the likelihood of trial periods occurring.

Observability.

Observability is an attribute that is positively related to an innovation’s rate of adoption (Rogers, 2003). The more opportunities potential adopters have to observe an innovation being used, the greater the likelihood of adoption (Rogers, 2003). Rogers (2003) specifically considered two technological components for which observability should account: (a) the hardware, which is

the tool that embodies the technology, and (b) the software, which is the information base for the technology to be used.

Summary

From extending outreach to friends, distant family, potential employers, and current customers, new media platforms have revolutionized the world (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Not only has new media changed personal communication, it has created a shift in the socio-economy of business ventures and crossed geographical boundaries (Indrpati & Henari, 2012). New media has changed the face of small- and medium-sized enterprises and with its extended reach new media platforms have created essential tools for developing countries. Currently, a growing number of small- and medium-sized enterprises in developing countries have access to the new media tools necessary to use information and communication technologies, but each platform comes with limitations (Murugesan, 2013). However, by understanding new media trends in the United States, media leaders in developing countries could learn by example (Berger, 2009).

With the help of cultural exchange programs, participants from developing countries are presented with new perspectives through experiential learning opportunities (Bruening & Shao, 2005), such as internships and job shadowing. When individuals engage in a cross-cultural exchange or an internship opportunity, they may become captivated and informed by new experiences, which could impact their lives personally and professionally in their home countries (Chau, 1990). With proper planning and research, cultural exchange programs and international internships can be a positive experience for students and professionals, including individuals whose perceptions were described as negative before such experiences (George, 2014).

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the methods used to achieve the objectives of this study. This chapter is divided into five major sections: Introduction, including the purpose of the study, objectives, and general information; Thick Description; Procedures; and Data Analysis.

Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) prior to the beginning of the study. Document number AG-1425 was assigned to the approved application (see Appendix D).

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to understand the perceptions of selected Entrepreneur Fellows from Kenya, South Africa, and Uganda regarding their experiences with the digital media training they received in the United States, the culture of the United States, their internship/job shadowing experiences, and perceptions of the group activities during the grant-funded exchange program. The inquiry aimed to identify common themes gathered from the Entrepreneur Fellows before and after the program, and how they planned to apply their learning experiences to enterprise projects in their home countries. The results from this mixed methods study may be used to develop programs, which could allow for the exchange of knowledge, skills acquisitions on entrepreneurship, and successful techniques to be used in cross-cultural exchanges in the future.

Six research objectives guided this study.

1. Describe the personal and professional characteristics (sex, age, and, country of residence) of the African Entrepreneur Fellows.
2. Identify digital media use of African Entrepreneur Fellows' prior to the U.S. training program.
3. Identify digital media use of African Entrepreneur Fellows six months after the U.S. training program.
4. Determine African Entrepreneur Fellows' perceived barriers to adoption of new media tools following the U.S. training program.
5. Describe the African Entrepreneur Fellows' perceptions of U.S. culture.
6. Describe African Entrepreneur Fellows' perceptions of the training program received in the United States.

Design of the Study

To address each of the six objectives, a mixed research method was used to collect qualitative and quantitative data. A questionnaire and interview-themed analysis was used to examine the perceptions of the Fellows' during and after their U.S. training program. The aim of interview-themed analysis was "to provide knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon under study" (Downe-Wamboldt, 1992, p. 314).

Creswell (2009) explained, mixed methods analysis mixes quantitative and qualitative data analysis in several procedures of data collection, analysis and interpretation. The two different data analysis forms are separate but connected (Creswell, 2009). This study used the explanatory sequential design as described by Creswell and Plano Clark, (2011). The design of this study begins with quantitative data collection and analysis, and then is followed up with qualitative data collection and analysis. All 12 individuals provided consent when they began the

survey. This allowed for the follow-up interviews to take place following the first phase of data collection. Therefore the quality of mixed-methods is defined as a combination of research methods to combine and form an “expanded understanding of research problems.” (Creswell, 2009, p. 203)

Mixed methods research requires both quantitative and qualitative methods (Creswell, 2009). A mixed methods approach combines the in-depth numerical data collection with the detailed dialogues of the qualitative research paradigm. Creswell (2009) explained, “researchers employ a mixed methods design to broaden understanding by incorporating both qualitative and quantitative research, or to use one approach to better understand, explain, or build on the results from another approach” (p. 205). Quantitative research focuses on the exploration of different social meanings of personal experiences to uncover a pattern that may be generalizable (Creswell, 2007, 2009), and qualitative research explores a participant’s experience and perspective to draw out and illuminate personal meaning (Creswell, 2009). The quantitative questionnaire in this study was chosen to explore the social media perceptions of the Fellows’ prior to their arrival in the United States, and the qualitative themed analysis was used to describe the Fellows’ opinions regarding the training program through an interview procedure.

To gain understanding of the participants’ opinions and knowledge of digital media before the U.S. training program, the Fellows were asked to take a pre-arrival questionnaire. This section of the data collection process analyzed the Fellows’ uses and perceptions of digital media. Dillman (2007) described the advantages of a survey questionnaire as:

It is the development of survey procedures that create respondent trust and perceptions of increased rewards and reduced cost for being a respondent, that take into account features of that survey situation, and that have as their goal the overall reduction of survey error (p. 29).

Follow-up data collection, i.e., a Skype interview, was conducted six months after the U.S. portion of the project to analyze how participants made meaning of their U.S. training program. This section of the data collection process reflected the Fellows' perceptions of digital media after receiving the U.S. training program, and explored the techniques they implemented in their entrepreneurial enterprises after returning home. Kolb (1984) described reflection as an important process of experiential learning to gain knowledge from attaining experience and transforming it. Follow-up interviews provided specific instances of the experiences shared by the Fellows in regard to the phenomenon studied.

A rich, thick description of the participants' and the setting surrounding this project was developed to help the reader determine the transferability of this study for possible exchange programs in the future (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). This description will allow readers to determine if the procedures of this study would be applicable to other situations (Creswell, 2007).

Thick Description

The grant-funded project, sponsored by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, was a two-way educational exchange program, which brought 12 African entrepreneurs to the United States ("Empowering Aspiring Entrepreneurs," 2013). Faculty of OSU paired with three in-country partners who served as proposers of the project. Those original partners included Agri-ProFocus in Kenya, University of the Western Cape in South Africa, and Straight Talk Foundation in Uganda. These partners helped with the recruitment of applicants, coordinated with U.S. Embassy and Consulate staff, facilitated seminars, organized visits of U.S. participants and supported entrepreneurial projects after the Fellows returned home ("Empowering Aspiring Entrepreneurs," 2013). The project was guided by six goals that ranged from training Fellows with new entrepreneurship skills to collaborating

with successful enterprise projects around Oklahoma (“Empowering Aspiring Entrepreneurs,” 2013).

The project was executed as a three-phase process. The first two phases brought four Kenyans, four South Africans, and four Ugandans to the United States and, more specifically, to the campus of Oklahoma State University. During the Entrepreneurial Fellows’ stay in Oklahoma, the Fellows’ attended sessions where they learned about U.S. history and culture, technology and social media, business development, and customer service. During the Fellows’ second week in Oklahoma, each Fellow was paired for a three-week internship with a business, organization, not-for-profit, government agency, or educational center in Oklahoma and Texas for an internship/job shadowing experience.

The five-week educational and professional development experience focused on entrepreneurship and development with the intent to include marginalized groups. The first round of Entrepreneurial Fellows’ traveled to the United States during May 2014. A second round of eleven Fellows’ traveled to the United States during October 2014. The final portion of the second phase of the project included the Fellows’ traveling to Washington, D.C., for a Professional Fellows’ Congress hosted by the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. The remaining phases included a group of Oklahoma State University faculty members, internship providers, and others who interacted with the Fellows’ traveling to Kenya, South Africa, and Uganda to experience the Fellows’ enterprises and to see how they implemented knowledge, skills and attitudes learned during the United States training program.

A total of 23 Fellows traveled to the United States, but the population for this study was twelve Fellows’ who participated in the first phase of the exchange during May 2014. The participants were selected based on an application and interview process. During the fall of 2013, applications for participation in the educational and professional development program were sent

to project coordinators in Kenya, South Africa, and Uganda (see Appendix B). After receiving and evaluating the completed applications, OSU faculty members from the Department of Agricultural Education, Communications and Leadership determined the applicants who received a Skype interview. Faculty members interviewed applicants via Skype and invited participants for the exchange program based on their applications and interviews. Selected participants were notified by email of their admission into the program (see Appendix C). The first group consisted of seven male participants and five female participants: two males and two females from Kenya; two males and two females from South Africa; and two males and two females from Uganda.

The 12 participants spent five weeks in the United States. During the first week, the Fellows' were housed on the campus of Oklahoma State University where they received training in social entrepreneurship, Native American entrepreneurship, business startups/business development, proposal/contract writing, marketing, and social media use and technology.

During the Fellows' stay in Oklahoma, they resided in on-campus apartments where common living and sharing of rooms offered additional opportunities for interaction. During the weekends, Fellows' engaged in cultural activities around Oklahoma. These cultural activities included visiting sites such as the Stilwell Strawberry Festival, Stillwater FFA Banquet, Cherokee Cultural Center, Oklahoma City Bombing Memorial, Woolaroc Museum, and the Tall Grass Prairie Preserve.

On the tenth day of the program, the Fellows began a 15-day internship with organizations or companies similar to their entrepreneurial enterprises (see Table 1). OSU faculty members communicated with the Fellows prior to arrival to secure hosts consistent with the Fellows' entrepreneurial goals. The hosts of the Fellows were secured by the project team members.

Table 1

Fellows' (by Alias) and Their Internship/Job Shadowing Hosts ($N = 12$)

Alias	Host
Ann	HOPE Food Science, OSU Food & Agricultural Product Center, Green Goodies by Tiffany
Katie	Indian Territory Goat Farm, Sparks Beef Research Center, Lopez Foods, Cimarron Meats, Oklahoma Pork Council, Ralph's Packing Company, Stephens County Extension, OSU Food Animal Veterinarian
Jennifer	Custar Farms, Earth Element, Stillwater Farmers' Market, National Women in Agriculture Association, OSU College of Human Sciences
Steve	Oklahoma Foundation Seed Stock, Lorenz Seed, OSU Department of Plant and Soil Sciences
Megan	Formal Fantasy, OSU Department of Design, Housing and Merchandising, Joann's Fabric, Martha's Trunk
Matthew	Oklahoma Farm Bureau, Oklahoma Association of Electric Cooperatives
Tim	Lincoln County Extension, Oklahoma Foundation Seed Stock, OSU Department of Plant & Soil Sciences, Lorenz Seed
George	Meridian Technology Center, Riata Center for Entrepreneurship, OSU Center for Innovation and Economic Development
Jessica	Central Technology Center, Department of Oklahoma Career and Technology Education, International Career Development Association, Meridian Technology Center, Oklahoma Department of Education, and OSU College of Human Sciences
Bryan	Rolling Plains Agricultural Compost, Indian Territory Farms, Riata Center for Entrepreneurship, OSU Composting Plant
Mark	Oklahoma ABLE TECH, OSU Department of Animal Science, Poultry Science Center Texas A&M University, Lost Creek Mushroom Farm, MPower
James	RedRock Bakery, Braum's, Orange Leaf

Note: The Entrepreneurial Fellows were given aliases for this study in accordance with OSU's Institutional Review Board policies and procedures.

During the fifth week of the program, Fellows' participated in a conference in Washington, D.C., hosted by the U.S. Department of State, as well as experienced various cultural activities while in the U.S. capitol.

A combination of faculty members from Oklahoma State University developed the grant proposal. Dr. D. Dwayne Cartmell II was responsible for overall supervision of the exchange project budget. Dr. M. Craig Edwards was responsible for overall coordination and served as the primary contact person with U.S. Embassy officials and Department of State personnel. Dr. Shida Henneberry served as an economics specialist and topic presenter and assisted with planning enterprise projects. Dr. Shelly P. Sitton was responsible for assisting with overall coordination and supervision of the project and served as the primary coordinator for internship placements, cultural activities, and project public relations. Dr. Craig E. Watters served as the entrepreneurship and small-business development specialist and assisted with planning and implementation of enterprise projects. Dr. K.S.U. Jayarante served as the external evaluator for the exchange project. Lisa Taylor, doctoral student and project assistant, was responsible for the coordination of travel, lodging, and meeting itineraries. Brentney Maroney, master's student and project assistant, was responsible for organizing applications, assisting with internship placements, managing media platforms, and conducting day-to-day digital engagement tasks.

A variety of volunteers, specialists, OSU faculty members, and staff were necessary to provide the training program for the Entrepreneurial Fellows. Each of the volunteers shared their knowledge and expertise with the Fellows. In addition, many industry leaders assisted by hosting the Fellows' during their internship experiences.

The researcher for this study also served as a project assistant for the project as noted above. The researcher was deeply engaged in the project by knowing the participants on a personal level and worked with each of them on a daily basis throughout their time in the United

States. The researcher was also a major contributor during the internship placements, and was involved with transporting the Fellows to and from their assigned internship sites. The researcher also had experience with international travel, as she studied abroad in Italy the summer of 2012. Therefore, the researcher could have developed opinions prior to when the research was conducted.

Procedures

The following procedures were used to guide this study. A mixed methods approach was used to conduct this study, including an online questionnaire prior to the Fellows' arrival in the United States and a post-interview six months after the Fellows' return to their home countries.

Quantitative Questionnaire

Data were collected via a web-based questionnaire developed and distributed through Qualtrics, an online data collection tool. Utilizing the web-based questionnaire created an ease of transforming the numerical data into Excel or SPSS. An email was sent April 21, 2014, to the 12 Fellows, two-weeks prior to their arrival in the United States (see Appendix F). The email included an introduction to the questionnaire and a link to the Qualtrics questionnaire. A follow-up email was sent one week following the first email. At the beginning of the questionnaire, the Fellows were asked to consent to participating in the data collection (see Appendix G). The Fellows could agree to participate in the study by entering their email address. The agreement gave consent to use the Fellows' answers in both the online questionnaire and the follow-up interview. All 12 Fellows' agreed to participate in the study.

The questionnaire consisted of 13 questions (see Appendix H). Three questions pertained to the demographic characteristics of the Fellows' (sex, age, and country of residence). Ten questions asked respondents about their new media use and media outlet preferences. These questions were related to current new media platforms used, frequency of use, hours spent on new

media platforms per week, reasons for interacting on new media platforms, how new media platforms are used, and reasons for using new media platforms.

Qualitative Interviews

Modifications were made to the document AG-1425 to include the interview portion of the data collection process. Approval was granted on September 22, 2014 (see Appendix E). A follow-up interview was added to further investigate perceptions of the 12 Fellows' six months after their visit and training experiences in the United States. The guided interviews were structured, the interview was scheduled, and the interviewer was prepared with a list of topics or questions. The interviews were conducted via Skype. Skype is a new media tool allowing users to communicate by text, voice calls, and video calls (Skype, 2014). This social media tool was used because the Fellows had already set up Skype accounts prior to traveling to the United States, as this tool was used during the initial acceptance interview process. An email was sent on September 24, 2014, to the 12 Fellows, requesting time preferences to conduct Skype interviews (see Appendix F). A follow-up email was sent one week following the first email. Ten of the 12 Fellows were interviewed separately and asked the same series of structured, open-ended questions (see Appendix I). Nine questions pertained to the Fellows' U.S. training on digital media and the adopted strategies they were using in their enterprises. Four questions pertained to the Fellows' first-week of training that included classroom discussions and their weekend cultural experiences while in the United States. One Fellow was given the questions prior to the interview because of a hearing impairment. Interviews utilized audio recording via voice recorder. The researcher also had the chance to listen to responses multiple times. This aided in the transcription of the data.

Data Analysis

Before the research study occurred, the researcher gained feedback regarding the data collection instruments from project team members. Based upon the feedback, only minor revisions were necessary. Minor grammatical issues were addressed on the survey and questionnaire.

Quantitative Data Analysis

A quantitative questionnaire was developed to measure the first two objectives of the Fellows' demographics/characteristics and views and perceptions of social media prior to the U.S. training program. Quantitative research uses interviews or questionnaires to gather information from groups of individuals (Ary, D., Jacobs, L. C., Razavieh, A., & Sorensen, C., 2006). Questionnaires allow the researcher to ask questions about opinions, behaviors, and characteristics of respondents (Crewell, 2007). The questionnaire responses were collected according to the principles of the Dillman Tailored Design Method (2007). This study employed a web-based questionnaire data collection process. Dillman (2007) encouraged web-based questionnaires as they are easy and comfortable for participants. Statistical data was conducted, analyzed and reported for each question.

The study's first research objective inquired about the Fellows' demographics including their sex, age, and country of residence. The second objective was to identify the use of digital media by the African Entrepreneur Fellows' prior to the U.S. training program. These two objectives were analyzed using frequencies.

Ary et al. (2006) described validity as the extent to which an instrument measures what it is supposed to measure. Rossi, P., Lipsey, M., & Freeman, M., (2004) defined reliability as the extent to which the same results are produced when using the instrument repeatedly. A panel of experts consisting of the project leaders and project members examined the questionnaire to

ensure its face and content validity. Due to a small population size, reliability was not measured because scaled items did not exist on the instrument, and, therefore, no measurement of internal consistency, such as Cronbach's Alpha statistic, was calculated.

During this study, participant identification was kept confidential. Only the researcher had access to any identification data via the web-based questionnaire website.

Qualitative Data Analysis

A qualitative interview was conducted to measure the last four objectives pertaining to the Fellows' perceptions following the U.S. training program. Interviews are one of the most widely used methods of qualitative research to gather the opinions, beliefs, and feelings of an individual (Ary et al., 2006). Analysis of qualitative data involves identifying patterns or themes (Merriam, 1998) to assist in understanding a phenomenon of interest to a researcher.

The interview analysis was implemented to achieve detailed information to further expand upon results from the first-phase questionnaire. The researcher open coded the transcripts for possible themes using a comparative data analysis. Low-inference descriptors, such as direct quotes, were selected to enhance the credibility of the study. The data analysis for this study consisted of examining the frequencies describing the perceptions of the Fellows.

Objective Three determined the Fellows' use of digital media six months following the training program. The responses were analyzed for themes by a selected panel of coders. The panelists consisted of two research experts unaffiliated with the U.S. training program and the researcher. The two research experts were agricultural communications graduate students with previous courses in research methodology. The research panel of coders served as the unbiased negotiators, as the researcher was heavily involved in the U.S. training project.

Objective four, the Fellow's perceived barriers for the adoption of new media tools following the training, were determined by evaluating themes that emerged. The fifth objective examined the Fellows' perceptions of the U.S. culture. These responses were analyzed for themes by a selected panel. The final objective, Fellows' perceptions of the training program, was analyzed for themes by a selected panel as well.

The researcher analyzed the transcripts manually. Upon conclusion of the interviews and after the completion of transcription, validity was ensured by member checks, in which the researcher asked the participants to verify the accuracy of the reported data (Creswell, 2009). Lincoln and Guba (1985), describe member checks as "a comprehensive check to not only test for factual and interpretative accuracy but also to provide evidence of credibility--the trustworthiness criterion analogous to internal validity in conventional studies" (p. 374). In this study, the process of interview transcriptions by the researcher served as a measure of validity and the process of member checks after the transcripts were completed served as a measure of credibility. The selected panel of coders and the researcher separately analyzed the transcribed interviews for themes. Once the themes were analyzed, the group of coders and researcher negotiated and decided on themes for objectives three through objective six.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The findings of this study are organized by the six research objectives.

Findings Related to Research Objective 1

Research Objective 1: Describe the personal and professional characteristics (sex, age, and country of residence) of the African Entrepreneur Fellows.

Of the 12 respondents, more than one half (58.3%, $f = 7$) were male. The minimum age of participants was 25, and the maximum age was 42. Four participants were from 25 to 29 years of age, six participants were between the ages of 30 to 39, and two participants were 40 and 42 years of age, respectively (see Table 2).

Findings Related to Research Objective 2

Research Objective 2: Identify digital media use of African Entrepreneur Fellows' prior to the U.S. training program.

Before the training program, the data revealed 100% ($f = 12$) of respondents indicated they used new media platforms. Participants were asked to indicate all new media platforms they used. Of the new media platforms, 91.7% ($f = 11$) of participants used Facebook, 91.7% ($f = 11$) used Skype, 50% ($f = 6$) indicated they used LinkedIn, 50% ($f = 6$) used YouTube, 33.3% ($f = 4$) used Twitter, 16.7% ($f = 2$) indicated using Pinterest, 8.3% ($f = 1$) indicated using Instagram, and

Table 2

Age of Respondents (N = 12)

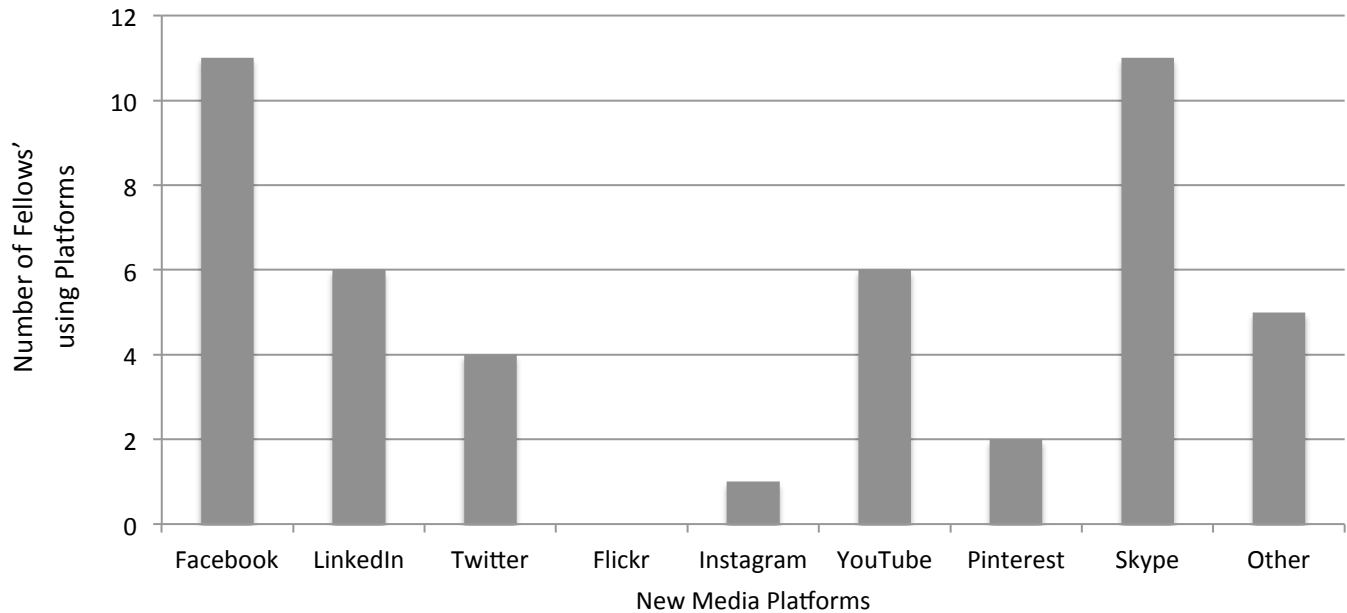
Age (Years)	<i>f</i>	%
25	1	8.3
27	1	8.3
28	1	8.3
29	1	8.3
31	1	8.3
33	3	25.0
36	1	8.3
39	1	8.3
40	1	8.3
42	1	8.3

41.7% ($f = 5$) indicated they used other new media tools. The Fellows' mentioned using Google+ and WhatsApp as other forms of new media. Of the twelve participants, no one had used Flickr (see Table 3).

In the questionnaire, respondents were asked how often they used each of the new media platforms mentioned. When asked about Facebook, 50% ($f = 6$) indicated they *always* used the platform while 25% ($f = 3$) mentioned they only used Facebook *occasionally*. Of participants who used LinkedIn, 25% ($f = 3$) indicated they *always* used the platform and 8.3% ($f = 1$) indicated they *never* used the platform. When asked about Twitter, 16.7% ($f = 2$) *always* used the platform, and 25% ($f = 3$) of the Fellows used the outlet *occasionally*, and 25% ($f = 3$) *never* used Twitter.

Table 3

Respondent's New Media Platform Use Prior to the U.S. Training Program (N = 12)



Of the participants who used Instagram, 8.3% ($f = 1$) indicated *always* using the platform and 25% ($n = 3$) stated they *never* used Instagram. When asked about YouTube, 25% ($f = 3$) of the Fellows indicated they used the platform *often*, and another 25% ($f = 3$) mentioned they *occasionally* used this new media platform. Of participants who used Pinterest, 16.7% ($f = 3$) indicated they used the platform *occasionally*, and 16.7% ($f = 3$) indicated they have *never heard of the new media platform*. When asked about Skype, 75% ($f = 3$) of the Fellows' used the platform *occasionally* and 16.7% ($f = 2$) used Skype *often*. Finally, when participants were asked about Flickr, 50% ($f = 2$) of Fellows' indicated *never* using the new media platform, and another 50% ($f = 2$) of Fellows admitted to having *never heard of the new media platform* (see Table 4).

Table 4

Respondents' New Media Platform Uses (N = 12)

	Always	Often	Occasionally	Never	Never Heard of the Platform
Facebook	50.0%	20.0%	30.0%	0.0%	0.0%
LinkedIn	40.0%	10.0%	40.0%	10.0%	0.0%
Twitter	20.0%	0.0%	40.0%	40.0%	0.0%
Flickr	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%
Instagram	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%	75.0%	0.0%
YouTube	0.0%	40.0%	40.0%	20.0%	0.0%
Pinterest	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	0.0%	50.0%
Skype	0.0%	25.0%	60.0%	15.0%	0.0%

Note: Not all questions were answered by every respondent.

The Fellows were asked on average how many hours each week they spent on new media platforms. The minimum number of hours was 0.5, and the maximum was 42 hours per week. The most frequent response related to number of hours spent on new media platforms was 16.7% ($f=2$). The Fellows' indicated they spent two hours a week on new media platforms, and another 16.7% ($f=2$) of Fellows' spent seven hours on platforms each week.

The questionnaire revealed 100% ($f=12$) of the Fellows' interacted with others on new media platforms. When asked what encourages their interaction on the new media platforms, 100% ($f=12$) of the participants indicated they *interact when an opportunity exists to learn new information*, 75% ($f=9$) admitted to interacting when *content relates to their personal experiences*, 83.3% ($f=10$) indicated they interacted with *potential customers*, and 33.3% ($f=4$) of Fellows' selected *other*. Of the participants who selected *other*, 66.7% ($f=8$) mentioned *interacting to share ideas, religious and political convictions* as their reason for using the new

media platforms. Other reasons included *interacting with friends, family & colleagues; networking; sharing information; and sharing new and interesting information with teammates.*

Participants were also asked to rank preferences regarding how they used new media platforms. For the option *connecting with family and friends*, 50% ($f = 6$) of the participants ranked this first, 16.7% ($f = 2$) ranked this as the third option and 8.3% ($f = 1$) ranked this the fourth option. Of the participants, 41.7% ($f = 5$) ranked *marketing his or her business* as their second option, 8.3% ($f = 1$) of the Fellows ranked this as the first option, 8.3% ($f = 1$) ranked this as the third option and 16.7% ($f = 2$) rank this the fourth option. Regarding the option of *connecting with companies*, 41.7% ($f = 5$) of the Fellows ranked this their fourth option, and 16.7% ($f = 2$) ranked this the second or third option. For the option *finding business-related information*, 33.3% ($f = 4$) of the participants ranked this their third option, 16.7% ($f = 2$) of the participants ranked this their first option, 16.7% ($f = 2$) ranked this the second option and 8.3% ($f = 1$) ranked this the fourth option. When asked about *shopping or searching for special offers*, 75% ($f = 9$) of the participants ranked this the fifth option.

Findings Related to Research Objective 3

Research Objective 3: Identify digital media use of African Entrepreneur Fellows six months after the U.S. training program.

After an analysis by the panel, an overall theme emerged pertaining to Research Objective 3:

Theme: Most Fellows' adopted Flickr following the U.S. training program.

Six of 10 participants interviewed adopted the social media platform Flickr following the United States training program. Other Fellows' adopted Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

Findings Related to Research Objective 4

Research Objective 4: Determine African Entrepreneur Fellows' perceived barriers to adoption of new media tools following the U.S. training program.

After an analysis by the panel, two overall themes emerged pertaining to Research Objective 4:

Theme: The Fellows' gained a better understanding of the possibilities new media outlets can bring to their enterprises.

Tim, a self-employed agro-input dealer, said:

I adopted WhatsApp and Facebook after my U.S. training. Before I left [for the United States] I was on Facebook, but I was just there for my own use. I realized I could even market my business over Facebook. So now, I have been able to post products like tree seedlings and coffee seedlings. I have had so many calls asking about my products” (P14: 14-18).

Jessica, a director of an educational foundation in South Africa, described her new goals with new media outlets after the U.S. training. “It is about awareness and building the brand for my company now, so people know what exactly we are doing. Whenever someone would say my company name, the other person would know exactly who they were talking about” (P22: 12-15).

James, a small business owner, said, “ [new media] gives you an opportunity to advertise and communicate with people that actually use your product. A lot more people are coming in the store and not a lot of competition because of the service we have been doing. [l]earning about social media has helped my business” (P30: 21-25).

Even though many Fellows had experienced the advantages of new media, some disadvantages, were also mentioned. Megan, a newly established dress storeowner, shared her thoughts about new media platforms:

[t]he more I use new media the more I attract people. Then there is more of a need to expand. And I am not in a position to acquire the machines, the thread, and buying a more convenient location in town since I'm still out of town (P11: 34-35).

Bryan, an environmental consultant, expressed his concern: "We are not growing fast enough, I don't think, to accommodate the geographical size impact social media can make" (P24: 39-40).

Theme: Cost, availability of the Internet, and lack of knowledge of new media outlets were the biggest challenges faced by African Entrepreneur Fellows in their small- and medium-sized business enterprises.

Technology advancement is a growing issue for business owners and entrepreneurs in countries such as Kenya, South Africa, and Uganda. The Fellows were captivated by the quickness of Internet speed and the variety of new media platforms available in the United States. The Fellows were soon reminded of these disadvantages in their countries after returning home.

Six of 10 Fellows' interviewed indicated cost was the main challenge regarding using new media in their enterprises. Mark, a regional coordinator in Uganda with an interest in poultry, said this: "Sometimes the social media is a bit expensive. Facebook and LinkedIn are not always used by the local customers you have around you. [in] most of the rural areas in Uganda, the network Internet is slow and the network sometimes turns off" (P27: 29-31).

George, a high school business teacher in Kenya, stated this about the challenges he faces with new media:

I think the major one is cost. Sometimes it can be quite prohibiting. It can be very expensive. When I compare cost of using social media in the U.S., which I have experienced, and whenever I am using it here at home, it is significantly more expensive (P18: 32-34).

Steve, a field coordinator from Uganda, shared this:

We have to buy Internet data for the mobile phones to be able to use. [w]e don't normally use computers to communicate on social media. Normally, we just use the phone. The fact that phones use so much battery and could possibly lead to someone missing out on information (P9: 4-12).

James said, “[y]ou have to fight for your Internet access. It is not as quick as it is in the U.S.” (P30: 29-30), and Tim explained that, “[o]ur network is always poor” (P15: 16).

Findings Related to Research Objective 5

Research Objective 5: Evaluate the African Entrepreneur Fellows’ perceptions of U.S. culture.

After an analysis by a panel of experts, an overall theme emerged pertaining to Research Objective 5:

Theme: Fellows left the United States with a more positive opinion of U.S. culture compared to their opinions on arrival.

The main concern Fellows’ had about traveling to the United States for their training was their perceptions of the U.S culture. Two participants mentioned their appreciation of U.S. culture during weekend events, and three expressed their astonishment of being treated fairly by U.S. citizens other than those involved in the project.

Megan stated:

The hospitality of the people made the trip so impacting. The people were so warm and welcoming. You would think we might be looked at as black/white, but people are just very welcoming and warm. It made me feel like we are not treated different (P13: 7-11).

Mark shared:

I was so focused to seeing how the people with disabilities in the U.S. would be treated. That was my biggest concern. But I found that people with disabilities in the U.S. are not treated any different, which is very different from here. They know to cater to the person with disabilities. It was something I will never forget in my life (P29: 14-21).

Tim said:

The most happiest moments was the ones in Oklahoma. At first I didn't know how people would welcome me. But everywhere I would go, people were free. You would see it in them. They would give me time with them and share things. We were all brothers and sisters (P17: 12-17).

Jennifer, a wellness center director and a director of a non-profit organization, indicated this view:

It was my dream to know more about America. I can tell you now that Americans are not arrogant but instead are kind human beings. I did not know they could share with me, shake my hand, love with me, so I thought extremes about them (P7: 3-6).

Katie, a capacity officer interested in pork production, described her thoughts about Americans in the work place:

I really liked seeing how people in companies were completely hands-on. I liked their work ethic. People are very prompt, on time, and they would do exactly what they said they would do. I just like the ambiance. People are just honest. They will tell you what works and they will tell you if it doesn't work and this was my experience. Everyone was generally very very nice to work with and good to learn from (P3: 28-31).

Two Fellows' were inspired by the cultural experiences they had and realized their countries were more similar to the U.S. than they thought.

Steve said: "I remember the visit to the Cherokee Nation. It was the most interesting to me because they had the way of life that was most similar to the way of life for an African of the past (P10: 10-12).

Tim shared his experience as well:

At the Cherokee nation, they had most tools that were used in the ancient days in the U.S., but surprisingly, those tools are the ones we are using right now over here in Uganda. I was like my gosh! It showed me how well and how advanced the U.S. is in technology. And then it gave me initiative to try and see how well I can be innovative (P16: 29-31).

He continued by saying, "It was so exciting because for us, we thought that Americans did not have history, but I realized that they also use local tools for farming and they also use local materials. It was a bit exciting" (P16: 39-41).

Findings Related to Research Objective 6

Research Objective 6: Describe African Entrepreneur Fellows' perceptions of the training program received in the United States.

After an analysis by the panel, an overall theme emerged pertaining to Research Objective 6:

Theme: The Fellows' had an overall positive opinion of the U.S. training program.

All 10 Fellows' interviewed were humbled by the experiences they had in the United States. Not only in their three-week internship, but the Fellows' also found satisfaction in the classroom, cultural activities, and discussions.

James commented: "Oklahoma State itself was cherry on the cake. Being at OSU and meeting all the people was a life-changing experience. I want to come back already" (P32: 7-9).

Tim said, "[t]he biggest benefit is I am connecting with different people from different states in the U.S. and others are even willing to come over and learn from here" (P17: 3-7). He elaborated further on his opinion of the program:

I have gained a family because of this project. I have met so many people and made so many connections. Everyone from different countries that I met in Washington has been very beneficial to me because they have given me knowledge. I get courage from them. If I am down or have a problem I just call someone or post something on Facebook. I have a family in the United States (P17: 21-25).

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter contains conclusions and implications based on the study's findings as well as recommendations for practice and further research.

Conclusions and Implications

Research Objective 1: Describe the personal and professional characteristics (sex, age, and country of residence) of the African Entrepreneur Fellows.

The typical participant was 30 to 39 years old and male. Because of the pre-determined requirements for the grant-funded project, respondents were equally distributed across the countries of Kenya, South Africa, and Uganda.

The personal and professional characteristics of the Entrepreneur Fellows' in this study were closely related to the demographics of an *African Entrepreneurship Sub-Saharan Africa Regional Report* conducted by Harrington and Kelley (2012), who found the profile of entrepreneurs to include males, 25 to 35 years of age. The same demographics matched with Amoros and Bosma (2013), who also found the profile of entrepreneurs to be males from 25 to 35 years of age.

Research Objective 2: Identify digital media use of African Entrepreneur Fellows prior to the U.S. training program.

Prior to visiting the United States, all 12 Fellows' used new media platforms and preferred using Facebook and Pinterest the most when compared to Twitter, LinkedIn, Flickr, Instagram, YouTube, and Skype. Respondents used Facebook *always* compared to the other new media tools. On a weekly average, the Fellows' spent most frequently two to seven hours on new media platforms and interacted when an opportunity existed to learn new information. The Fellows used platforms the most to connect with family and friends. Flickr and Pinterest were the two platforms the respondents had *never heard of* before their training in the United States. However, only nine of the 12 participants answered this question.

The Fellows used Pinterest, but also had never heard of the platform when asked a rephrased question. The researcher concluded the Fellows' were possibly not familiar with some of the different new media platforms listed in the online questionnaire. These findings are in agreement with Rogers (2003) knowledge stage of the innovation-decision process. Rogers (2003) describes the knowledge stages as, "when an individual is exposed to an innovation's existence and gains an understanding of how it functions." (p. 171)

Research Objective 3: Identify digital media use of African Entrepreneur Fellows six months after the U.S. training program.

While in the U.S., the Fellows realized the capability of involving new media in their enterprises. The Fellows were excited to learn the outreach of new media, as many did not realize new media could be used for business as well as personal use. However, the Fellows were apprehensive about the amount of information that could be transferred to their home countries, as technology is not as advanced as the United States. This echoes Rogers (2003) attribute of compatibility, which is described as, "the degree to which an innovation is perceived as consistent with the existing values, past experiences, and needs of potential adopters" (p. 240). This challenge was noted during the post interviews, which included 10 of the 12 Fellows.

After the training program was completed, many Fellows used new media platforms to expand their client base, advertise new business products and promote their personal brand. The Fellows' reported experiencing a significant increase in business, and attributed their growth of new customers to adoption of new media tools. James stated that, "learning about social media has helped my business. The amount of people that come into the store has picked up" (P30: 23-25). These advances are similar to capabilities of new media as mentioned by Taneja and Toombs (2014) and the power of new media as described by Ali (2011). As many Fellows' expressed their appreciation of new media, two Fellows' mentioned how they were unsure if they would be able to keep up with the range of clients to which new media could provide them access. To that end, Megan mentioned, "[w]ith social media there are so many clients on it than I ever imagined" (P11: 29-30).

The professional exchange program allowed for the Fellows' to experience the capabilities of new media platforms and the improvements new media could bring to their enterprises. A combination of experiences left the Fellows' with a desire to try new platforms and continue with already established tools.

Research Objective 4: Determine African Entrepreneur Fellows' perceived barriers to adoption of new media tools following the U.S. training program.

The Fellows' appreciated learning different aspects of platforms to apply in their professional settings and enterprise, but some participants experienced the learning in the U.S. could come with limitations. Although the Fellows appreciated the Internet speed, variety of platforms, and low cost in the United States, it was not entirely applicable to the technologies available to them in Africa. These findings reflect Rogers' (2003) attribute of compatibility. The main concerns the Fellows had were fears of the ability to keep up with the new client base as a result of new media adoption, the lack of knowledge of new platforms by other African citizens,

Internet availability, and cost of new media platforms. These concerns echo Rogers' (2003) complexity attribute, which is described as "the degree to which an innovation is perceived as relatively difficult to understand and use" (p. 257). These concerns also echo most of Murugesan's (2013) conclusions that in Africa, consumers are faced with the battles of bandwidth, coverage, and electric power when it comes to their adoption and use of technology. Drouillard et al. (2014), also reflected these concerns in concluding, "[l]ack of capital at the early stage is a commonly cited problem by entrepreneurs in East Africa" (p. 3). Even though Murugesan (2013) studied mobile applications in Africa, and the research by Drouillard et al., (2014) was a digital report, the findings in this study resonated with their findings. More important, Berger (2009) stated, "[b]y understanding trends in the USA, in particular, media leaders in Africa can prepare for the changes that will come to the continent and pre-empt some of the negative consequences for the industry" (p. 7). These findings mimic Rogers' (2003) issues of equality, where he describes the "gaps" between adoptions and adopters (p. 130).

Similar to the findings of Binu (2014), the Fellows in the exchange program expressed how they used mobile phones more often than the Internet on a computer to relieve on cost. This combination gave a better understanding of the challenges the Fellows' faced when they returned home. Overall, the Fellows explored more new media platforms after their training in the United States but had trouble maintaining the tools as the preferred platforms in Africa are different. These findings reflect Rogers (2003) compatibility attribute.

Research Objective 5: Describe the African Entrepreneur Fellows' perceptions of U.S. culture.

The Fellows' were excited to experience the United States, as 11 of the 12 had never been to the U.S. prior to the exchange program (see Appendix B). The Fellows expressed their appreciation for the cultural experiences and classroom discussions. However, the Fellows' were concerned about how they would be perceived when in the United States prior to arrival. The

Fellows' had fears of being treated unfairly based on race and expressed concerns about their perceptions of the arrogance of Americans.

While in Oklahoma, the Fellows were appreciative of the Americans' acceptance and hospitality. Many Fellows admitted to having the wrong perceptions of Americans and now thought of them as family. This finding is in agreement with George (2014), who concluded the Fellows, in her study, had fears prior to travel, but they later appreciated the willingness of Americans to help whenever possible. The finding is also in agreement with Suarez (2003) and Zhai (2004), who encouraged cultural interaction to help with the development of cultural diversity. The Fellows also commended the project on the Cherokee Nation cultural experience. The Fellows' found this experience was the closest reflection of their country and history. Steve said, "[i]t was most interesting to me because they had the way of life that was most similar to the way of life for an African of the past" (P10: 10-12).

The professional exchange program allowed the Fellows to experience the hard work, commitment and desire of Americans, both inside and out of the workplace. A combination of experiences left participants with the desire to return to Oklahoma to visit and/or continue their education. The impact of the project on the Fellows is in agreement with Chau (1990), who stated that cross-cultural opportunities allow individuals to be captivated by new experiences, which can impact their lives in their home countries.

Research Objective 6: Describe African Entrepreneur Fellows' perceptions of the training program received in the United States.

While in the United States the Fellows found satisfaction in the classroom, in their internship experiences, and during cultural activities. The Fellows were thankful for the internship pairings and expressed the importance of connections made with their U.S. mentors. For example, one Fellow said, "[i]t was so rewarding and is still ongoing. You placed me with the

best mentor. She shared all that she knew with me. Giving me the opportunity to work with her was amazing” (P12: 37-39). Therefore, the Fellows were impressed with their specific internship placements and how those internships could help them in the future. This is in agreement with Collins (2014) who said cross-cultural higher educational programs contribute to public good and global progress. This is also congruent with Bruening and Shao (2005) who stated experiential learning is the most effective teaching method when used with students from different countries to allow for new perspectives. The Fellows identified using new media platforms to increase client connections in their enterprises. The Fellows’ planned to use the networks established in their internship experiences to continue their desire to improve and grow their enterprises.

When researching new media in entrepreneurial enterprises in developing countries, Drouillard et al. (2014) stated the media evolution is creating opportunities for entrepreneurship, and rapidly increasing the scene in Africa with the stimulation of job creation. The Fellows explained how they are using new media platforms they learned in the United States to improve their business enterprises. Bryan indicated: “[w]e post photos on Facebook of our farm so people can see the activities and the crops. We also use Twitter to do the same” (P25: 2-3). Jessica explained:

If we have a project coming up, it is actually a very cool way. We post it online because we work off volunteers, and people who like the page are able to see what projects we are doing. If they cannot give money, they can volunteer their time. We really get a good response from people. It is a good way to get people engaged (P21: 35-38).

The researcher concluded the Fellows increased their knowledge of new media uses and cultural perceptions as a result of the U.S. training program. The Fellows perceived a need for close connections between their entrepreneurial enterprises, new media and their internship mentors. They planned to continue with many of the aspects and principles learned in the project

and intend to continue to keep the contacts made in the United States. The professional and cultural exchange program empowered the Fellows to continue to be successful and to make a difference within their communities, countries and elsewhere on the African continent.

Recommendations for Practice

The follow-up interviews allowed the Fellows to express their concerns about participating in the exchange program and the perceptions of the United States prior to their experience. Based on these concerns, information should be provided prior to traveling to address concerns with international travel during training programs which supports Bruening and Frick (2004), George (2014), Jones and Bjelland (2004) and Rodriguez and Roberts (2011) and in cross-cultural learning experiences. Programs also should consider a reflection during the program which supports findings from Pires (2000) and Rodriguez and Roberts (2011) and post-reflection after participants have returned to their home countries which agrees with Brueing and Shao (2005), Rodriguez and Roberts (2011). Each of these components could benefit and impact future programs. Participants also should interact with citizens in the country(ies) they visit to experience the different cultures as much as possible which agrees with Acker and Scanes (2000), Ibezim and McCracken (1994) and Zhai (2004).

The Fellows expressed a change in their perceptions toward people in the United States as a result of their experience, which is similar to the findings of George (2014). As such, the researcher recommends more higher education associations participate and host professional and cultural exchange programs to increase global awareness of participants, and project directors.

The Fellows described their appreciation for the amount of information gained pertaining to the use of social media in their small- and medium-sized enterprises in the follow-up interviews. However, many Fellows were unable to adopt the social media tools due to barriers faced with the technology in Africa, which has been noted by Drouillard et al. (2014) and

Murugesan (2013). Based on these challenges, the researcher recommends similar project directors determine preferred tools used by the participants prior to their arrival. The researcher also suggests U.S. project members focus on the social media platforms already established in the home countries of the participants in the classroom presentations. However, the researcher also suggests the presenters' expose the participants to new platforms, as they discuss already established tools for participants' entrepreneurial enterprises.

Furthermore, the questionnaire should be revised to determine the new media platforms used by participants to incorporate those tools into the United States training program. This could broaden the classroom discussions and teaching by the United States project members.

An incredible amount of learning can be generated from individuals participating in cultural educational exchange programs, which is in agreement with Acker and Scanes (2000), Bruening and Frick (2004), Brueing and Shao (2005), Jones and Bjelland (2004), Rodriguez and Roberts (2011) and Suarez (2003). Therefore, it is recommended the developers and hosts of such programs continue to find opportunities to produce and teach cultural and professional exchange projects.

Recommendations for Future Research

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, more research should be conducted to better understand the digital use of entrepreneurs in developing countries. Many of the Fellows in this study were confused by the new media platforms prior to traveling to the United States but were more aware after the training program.

Previous research shows advantages of hosting international exchange programs (Webb et al., 1999), and these programs lead to increased international awareness and more global knowledge (Collins, 2014). Pires (2000) found Americans' image of Africa continues to be seen as a "dark continent," and Americans' should continue to strive for establishing and maintaining

programs with Africans for educational and global purposes. Based on the lack of information and the cultural gap of knowledge that exists (Rogers, 2003), the need for additional research in these areas is important, especially in regard to exchange programs with a professional focus such as the example studied here.

Based on the findings and conclusions, more research should be conducted to better understand and describe the new media perceptions and challenges faced by the Entrepreneur Fellows. Previous research exists in developing countries, but minimal information is available related to entrepreneurship in developing countries and the involvement of entrepreneurs with new media platforms. Research should be considered for comparing all part of an exchange program, instead of just one such as in this study.

A follow-up study of the exchange project is suggested to examine any lasting impacts of the exchange program over time, especially in regard to their entrepreneurial networks, aspirations in Africa, perception of the United States, and global connectedness. Further research should be considered to examine the benefits and challenges of entrepreneurs involved in the agriculture sector and new media in developing countries.

Additional research should be conducted to explore the benefits, challenges and long-term effects of cultural exchange programs, especially related to aspiring entrepreneurs in developing countries. This would allow universities and other organizations to better understand the benefits of funding, planning and teaching exchange projects.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
GRANT PROPOSAL

**A Professional Fellows Program for Kenya, South Africa, and
Uganda Executive Summary**

The project's broad aim is to create professional collaborations and learning experiences between mid-level, emerging entrepreneurs from Kenya, South Africa, and Uganda and U.S. entrepreneurs as part of a two-way exchange program. The project's focus is entrepreneurship development with the intent to include marginalized groups. Multiple opportunities for enhanced learning and cross-cultural understanding of U.S. citizens also will be emphasized. Six goals will guide the project. The goals range from training leading to the Fellows acquiring entrepreneurial skills and attitudes to creating collaborations supporting their success with enterprise projects while sustaining U.S. mentor contacts through social media. The primary implementing organization is Oklahoma State University (OSU). OSU hosts the nationally recognized Riata Center for Entrepreneurship; its director is a proposer and will play a key role in the project. Three in-country partners have committed to the project: Agri-ProFocus – Agri-Hub (Kenya), University of the Western Cape (South Africa), and Straight Talk Foundation (Uganda).

The project will support the exchange of 24 Africans (8 per country; 12 during each of its two cycles) and 16 U.S. participants (8 per cycle) distributed among the African nations. The first group of Africans would train in the United States for 32 days inclusive of April/May 2014 with the second group trained similarly during September/October 2014. More than a dozen internship sites, spanning private

businesses to not-for-profits to government agencies to education centers, have committed to serving as mentors for the African Fellows, and other potential sites are being discussed. The first group of U.S. participants would travel to Africa in July 2014 (15 days in-country) and the second group in either December 2014 or January 2015.

A Professional Fellows Program for Kenya, South Africa, and Uganda Project

Rationale/Need/Justification

Paul Collier (2007), in his book *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries are Failing and What Can be Done About It*, described four “traps” that often conflate to mire some 58 countries into a stratum he labeled the world’s bottom billion. Kenya and Uganda are among the nations occupying Collier’s stratum, as are millions of blacks in South Africa’s highly segregated townships and rural areas who share a similar economic plight. These pernicious traps – conflict, being landlocked, overexploitation of a few natural resources (or “Dutch disease”) at the expense of other sectors of the economy, and bad/corrupt governance (Collier, 2007) – limit the economic empowerment of tens of millions in these countries.

Collier (2007), however, also stressed that, “[i]n every society of the bottom billion there are people working for change, but usually they are defeated by the powerful internal forces stacked against them” (p. 96). But he concluded poignantly, “*we should be helping the heroes* [italics added]” (p. 96). This project would seek to identify some of Collier’s *heroes* – individuals interested in business-enterprise development, including aspiring and emerging entrepreneurs – for travel to the United States to

receive training and participate in internship experiences with business professionals and entrepreneurship educators.

According to Juma (2011), “[t]he development of small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) has been an integral part of the development of all industrialized economies. This holds true in Africa” (pp. 142 – 143). However, as Moss (2007) explained, “. . . it is also clear that local businesses, especially budding entrepreneurs, face considerable barriers” (p. 235) in Africa. Moss (2007) identified a litany of ills facing African entrepreneurs, including “lack of property protection” (p. 234), regressive legal restrictions, and excessive regulations such as “colossal amounts of red tape and other headaches” (p. 234). Moss (2007) also described “segmentation,” i.e., “where very small firms tend to be owned by indigenous blacks and the medium and larger firms are owned by ethnic minorities or foreigners” (p. 235), making policy decisions impacting business very political. For example, in South Africa, these enterprises would include *spaza* shops, which are estimated to exceed 100,000 small businesses “with a collective turnover of R7 billion [i.e., South African Rand; ~\$650m USD]” (Charman, Petersen, & Piper, 2012, p. 48).

Although this project *will not be limited* to entrepreneurs in the agricultural sector, the proposers recognize the significance and potential for agribusiness development and its impact on the economic livelihoods of millions of rural Africans and their communities, e.g., enterprises featuring value addition (or food processing/post-harvest transformation). In support, Juma (2011) asserted that, “creating links between knowledge and business development is the most important challenge facing agricultural renewal in east African countries” (p. 143). The importance of the

agricultural sector to the economies of the target countries is undeniable. This is evidenced acutely by many of the women who populate rural Africa (Jivetti & Edwards, 2010) and grow much of its staple foods. Thus, “[t]ransformations in the food processing sectors of developing countries are increasingly seen as strategic from the point of view of export earnings, domestic industry restructuring, and citizens’ nutrition and food security” (Juma, 2011, p. 155).

The potential for stimulating enterprises allied with and supporting agribusiness ventures is significant. Further, catalyzing tangential enterprises or what would be entirely non-agricultural businesses represents additional opportunities for aspiring entrepreneurs in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Overall Aim of the Project

The project’s broad goal is to establish and foment professional collaborations and learning experiences between mid-level, emerging entrepreneurs (approx. 25 to 40 years of age) from the countries of Kenya, South Africa, and Uganda and their professional counterparts in the United States as part of an *Entrepreneur Fellows (EFs)* two-way exchange program. The program’s focus is entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial development with the intent to include members of marginalized groups such as women and the disabled. Multiple opportunities for enhanced learning and cross-cultural understanding of U.S. citizens would be emphasized, as well. Six targeted goals and 18 enabling objectives will guide the project.

Targeted Goals/Enabling Objectives/Anticipated Outputs & Outcomes

Goal 1: Assist EFs in acquiring the professional leadership and entrepreneurial skills used by successful entrepreneurs in the United States, especially practices resonating

with their countries' economies and their opportunities for entrepreneurship. (*Note.* This goal supports achievement of the “President’s Young African Leaders’ Initiative [PYALI].”)

Objective 1: Recruit 24 EFs appropriate for participation in the exchange program (*output*). **Objective 2:** During their U.S.-based, five-week fellowships, the 24 Africans will receive training in a variety of topics supporting their understanding of business enterprise development, skills and practices of successful entrepreneurs, principles of ethical business leadership, business-networking strategies, venture financing propositions, and other topics as appropriate for their home environments (*output*).

Objective 3: At least 85% of the EFs will gain new knowledge and develop skills related to U.S. entrepreneurial principles and ethics by the end of the five-week program (*outcome*).

Goal 2: Facilitate the EFs participating fully in three-week internship experiences in business enterprises complementing their existing business ventures/interests or those to which they aspire. (*Note.* This goal supports achievement of the PYALI.)

Objective 4: Secure and monitor appropriate internship placements for the 24 EFs (*output*).

Objective 5: Facilitate digital connections between the selected incoming EFs and their anticipated internship mentors (e.g., through LinkedIn profiles, Facebook pages, and e-mail exchanges) (*output*).

Objective 6: During their fellowships, the 24 EFs will intern for three weeks in professional settings appropriate for their career interests and home working environments (*output*).

Objective 7: At least 85% of the EFs will develop positive attitudes toward U.S. business ethics and values and will aspire to apply those in their home businesses or institutions (*outcome*).

Goal 3: Provide real-world experiences in aspects of economic empowerment in Kenya, South Africa, and Uganda, through reciprocal exchanges for U.S. entrepreneurs/business professionals and officials of for-profit and not-for-profit agencies that support entrepreneurship, including internship mentors and appropriate university faculty (i.e., the “outbound” portion of the project for 2.5 weeks in length each time).

Objective 8: Facilitate the selection and travel of 16 U.S. citizens with experience in business enterprise development/entrepreneurial ventures, agencies supporting the same, and business education professionals to participate in the project’s follow-on activities in Kenya, South Africa, and Uganda (*output*).

Objective 9: The 16 U.S. participants will have established lasting professional linkages with the EFs and their business enterprises or related professional institutions by the end of the exchange program (*outcome*).

Goal 4: Build capacity for future collaborations between African and U.S. entrepreneurs and other parties interested in supporting entrepreneurship, such as practitioners, responsible agency officials, personnel of financial lending institutions, aspiring entrepreneurs, educators, and students, with special attention paid to empowering women and disabled entrepreneurs (*Note. This goal supports achievement of the PYALI.*)

Objective 10: Establish digital platforms, e.g., a project website, blogs, Facebook pages, Twitter posts, and e-mail exchanges, to increase the likelihood of collaboration between the EFs and their U.S. contacts continuing after funding for the project has ended (*outcome*).

Objective 11: By the end of the project, all participants – African and American – will be connected through at least one form of social media to exchange views, experiences, and entrepreneurial ideas going forward (*outcome*).

Objective 12: The project team members' (PTMs') recruiting efforts will emphasize the selection of women and individuals who are disabled (e.g., the hearing impaired) with the recruitment target that 50% of the EFs be derived from these historically marginalized groups in Kenya, South Africa, and Uganda (*output*).

Goal 5: Facilitate cultural experiences for the exchange participants – international visitors and U.S. outbound citizens – to support mutual awareness and understanding of the unique cultural norms found in the four nations comprising the project. (*Note.* This goal supports achievement of the PYALI.)

Objective 13: Multiple cultural activities will be planned for the EFs, including one day each weekend devoted to their participating in a significant event resonating with Oklahoma culture specifically and American culture broadly (*output*).

Objective 14: Multiple cultural activities will be facilitated for the U.S. exchange participants unique to and appropriate for the African country(ies) visited (*output*).

Objective 15: The U.S. participants will develop positive attitudes toward African cultures and learn to appreciate cultural diversity in their workplaces and communities

(outcome).

Goal 6: Augment sustained collaborations among and between the EFs and their U.S counterparts, including the EFs implementing entrepreneurial projects, as facilitated by follow-on visits by U.S. cohorts to Kenya, South Africa, and Uganda, as well as the participants’ reciprocal use of social media networking tools and other digital platforms. (*Note.* This goal supports achievement of the PYALI.)

Objective 16: A portion of the U.S. outbound citizens chosen to travel to the African countries will be drawn from the EFs’ pool of internship mentors (*output*).

Objective 17: The EFs will design projects for implementation in their home countries such that the likelihood of continued collaboration with the internship mentors is increased and sustained by both parties using social media and related digital platforms (*outcome*).

Objective 18: The EFs will attempt at least one entrepreneurial idea, principle, or concept they learned through the exchange program in their home countries (*outcome*).

Project Management Plan

Eight Kenyans, eight South Africans, and eight Ugandans will be selected as EFs. Two separate groups, inclusive of the three countries, would visit the United States. Both groups will include entrepreneurs/business professionals, aspiring entrepreneurs, and business educators. The PTMs, working with in-country partners in the three nations and respective U.S. Embassy officials (**see Attachments 1 & 2**), will work collaboratively to identify individuals appropriate for the program (Phase 1). Also during Phase 1, the project’s internship sites will be solidified, and pending final

selection of the EFs, the pre-departure orientation for the EFs will be conducted by the respective in-country partner organizations (ICPOs) working in collaboration with the PTMs, and the travel document procurement process will be facilitated by the PTMs and the ICPOs. Table 1 below illustrates the major Phases of the project management plan.

Table 1. Project Management Plan

Dates	Phase	Major Events/Tasks	Person(s)/Group(s) Responsible
8/1/13 – 12/31/13	1a	Recruitment of EFs (see related documents in Attachment 4); engage participants in social media.	PTMs; ICPOs; Relevant In-country Group Officials of U.S. Embassies
1/1/14 – 03/31/14	1b	Plan travel itineraries, lodging arrangements, and all activities for the first group of fellowship participants. Finalize internship sites. Schedule evaluator's travel.	PTMs; ICPOs; Internship Mentors; Invite Speakers; DOS, BECA Officials; External Evaluator
4/1/14 – 6/15/14 (5 wks. inclusive)	2	Conduct program for the first group of EFs (see detailed U.S. training schedule in Attachment 3). Conclude with Professional Fellows Congress in Washington, D.C.	PTMs; Internship Mentors; Invited Speakers; External Evaluator
5/1/14 – 6/30/14	3a	Make travel itineraries, lodging arrangements, transportation arrangements, etc. for the first U.S. participant group's travel to Africa.	PTMs, Internship Mentors, ICPOs; Group EFs; Relevant In-country Groups
7/1/14 – 7/31/14 (2.5 wks. inclusive)	3b	Conduct the activities associated with Phase 3a of the project (see draft schedule in Attachment 3). Recruit and interview applicants for group 2 of EFs.	PTMs, Internship Mentors; Group 1 of EFs; Relevant In-country Groups; Officials of U.S. Embassies
8/1/14 – 8/31/14	4a	Plan travel itineraries, lodging arrangements, and all activities for the second group of EFs. Finalize internship sites. Schedule evaluator's travel.	PTMs; ICPOs; Internship Mentors; Invite Speakers; DOS, BECA Officials; External Evaluator
9/1/14 – 11/15/14 (5 wks. inclusive)	4b	Conduct the program for the second group of EFs (see detailed U.S. training schedule in Attachment 3).	PTMs; Internship Mentors; Invited Speakers; External Evaluator
11/1/14 – 11/30/14	5a	Make travel itineraries, lodging arrangements, transportation arrangements, etc. for the second U.S. participant group's travel to Africa.	PTMs; Internship Mentors; ICPOs; All EFs
12/1/14 – 1/31/15 (2.5 wks. inclusive)	5b	Conduct the activities associated with phase 5a of the project (see draft schedule in Attachment 3).	PTMs; Internship Mentors; All EFs; Officials of U.S. Embassies

2/1/15 – 7/31/15	6	<p>Complete final reporting as required by the DOS. Complete the external evaluation of the project. Facilitate and monitor on-going DOS alumni/follow-on activities, especially social media channels supporting the project's long-term, sustainable collaborations and success of the EFs' individual entrepreneurial projects.</p>	<p>PTMs; External Evaluator; Internship Mer ICPOs; All EFs</p>
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Background Information on Implementing Organizations

OSU's Institutional Capacity and Commitment

OSU began providing international education through President Harry S. Truman's Point Four Program (later known as USAID) in 1949. OSU's extension and outreach mission's expenditures grow each year as the institution dedicates more of its faculty effort to educating those beyond its campuses. In 2012, Sponsored Program expenditures were more than \$300 million, including external awards for Sponsored Extension/Outreach, Instruction, and Research. Similar to the proposed project, the previous DOS, BECA project with Malian media specialists that OSU faculty conducted during 2007 (Cartmell et al., 2008, 2009; Robertson et al., 2010; Sitton et al., 2009) exemplified OSU's land-grant heritage and mission. The completed project was titled "Nurturing the 'Fourth Estate': Professional Development for Media Specialists in the Republic of Mali, West Africa" (**\$227,392**). Three of the PTMs together with Oklahoma media professionals worked closely with 14 Malian media specialists (**see Attachments 2 & 9**) to help them acquire professional skills and attitudes as well as understand better the unique role and responsibilities of a free press in a democratic society.

Three of the PTMs also conducted the project titled "Improving Food Security by Catalyzing Communication Networks between Key Stakeholders: Linking Media, Policies, and Communities in Kenya and Uganda" (**\$480,734**) from 2011 to 2012, which included 13 Kenyan and 13 Ugandan participants (Alcala et al., 2013; Edwards et al., 2012; George, 2012; George et al., 2012; Robertson et al., in press; Sitton et al.,

2012; Tillinghast et al., 2013). That project sought to *catalyze communication networks* between those stakeholders as it related to issues of food security. Experiences and work products (see **Attachment 9**) achieved by those Fellows included two feature stories in *The Oklahoman*, the state's largest newspaper; a television program on OETA, Oklahoma's public television station; feature stories on KOSU, a public radio network affiliate at OSU; service as a judge for 4-H youth competitions; making guest presentations in several courses at OSU on the topic of food security and culture in Kenya and Uganda; contributions to a newsletter produced by the Oklahoma Farm Bureau and to the *Oklahoma Living* magazine published by the Oklahoma Association of Electric Cooperatives, to name a few internship activities of the Food Security Fellows (see **Attachments 2 & 9**). See **Attachment 9** for an example of a Fellow's work on food security after returning to Kenya.

The Riata Institute for Entrepreneurship

The Riata Center includes a dedicated staff of professionals who foster the spirit of entrepreneurship through innovative outreach programs (see **Attachments 1 & 2**). The team is dedicated to high-impact entrepreneurial outreach at OSU, around the State of Oklahoma, and nationwide. The center is intimately engaged with the entrepreneurial community and strongly committed to creating unique experiential learning opportunities for its students.

From internships to venture creation to scholarship and research, the center offers experiential opportunities for its students. In particular, the *Riata Entrepreneurial Internship Program* provides unique entrepreneurial opportunities for highly qualified undergraduate and graduate students at OSU. The program offers

internships requiring students to work directly with entrepreneurs and senior executives in high-growth, innovative companies in Oklahoma. Interns are expected to add meaningful value to the work environment and to produce a number of useful deliverables. *This program would support the internship placement aims of the project.*

Three of the key team members who delivered the abovementioned projects are proposers of this project (**see Attachment 1**). The PTMs already have received commitments for invited speakers, tours/field trips, and internship placement sites for the African exchange

participants (**see Attachment 2**) to create interactions with U.S. experts, direct observations of businesses, opportunities for professional practice, guided reflection, and follow-on activities. **In-Country Partner Organizations (ICPOs)**

The PTMs anticipate paying the partnering organizations a modest “facilitation fee” for their services (**see Budget Narrative**). A reliable and appropriate in-country partner has been retained for each of the three target countries (**see Attachments 1 & 2**):

Kenya – Agri-ProFocus – Agri-Hub (<http://apf-kenya.ning.com/>)

Mr. Amos Thiong’o and Mr. Tito Arunga, as staff members of Agri-ProFocus, will lead their group in supporting the PTMs’ economic empowerment efforts in Kenya. Agri-ProFocus is a professional network of more than 110 organizations ranging from local NGOs to the private sector, all engaged in “promoting farmer entrepreneurship in developing countries,” including a longstanding collaboration with the Netherlands Development Organisation (**see their résumés in Attachment 1**).

South Africa – University of the Western Cape (UWC) (<http://www.uwc.ac.za>)

UWC is a historically black institution that became an “open university,” i.e., open admission to all racial groups, in the 1980s. It was a leader among those universities that were deeply invested in the long struggle to defeat the apartheid system and it continues to work in service of the “common people” of South Africa. Eslyn Isaacs is a senior lecturer in marketing and SME management and the head of postgraduate studies for the same at UWC. He is a member of an international team teaching entrepreneurship and small business management. Dr. Rubin Pillay, a native of South Africa, is a health entrepreneurship faculty member at OSU and holds a joint faculty appointment with UWC (**see their résumés in Attachment 1**).

Uganda – Straight Talk Foundation (<http://www.straighttalkfoundation.org/>)

Mr. Robert Muwawu, a Food Security Fellow (April/May 2011) in an earlier DOS-supported project delivered by the PTMs, is a livelihood officer at the Straight Talk Foundation (STF) in Uganda. STF is focused on educating and empowering the youth of Uganda, including their capacity for economic development and acquisition of entrepreneurial skills and attitudes. Mr.

Muwawu and his colleague, Mr. Gaster Kiyingi (**see their résumés in Attachment 1**), would be STF’s key staff members for this project.

The three ICPOs described above will assist PTMs with 1) *recruiting* applicants for the fellowships, 2) *providing* a pre-departure orientation for the selected EFs, 3) *liaising* with Public Affairs Section officials at the respective U.S. Embassies, 4) *facilitating* re-entry seminars for the returning EFs, 5) *coordinating* the follow-on visits of U.S. participants, and 6) *supporting* the EFs as they implement their entrepreneurial

projects after returning home.

Facilitating the Fellows' Individual Entrepreneurial Projects

Beginning with the EF application process, prospective Fellows will be asked about their plans in regard to entrepreneurial enterprises. Following the EFs' selection but before traveling, they will be linked through social media with one or more prospective internship mentors with knowledge of the EFs' areas of interest. The EFs also will be linked similarly with those PTMs with expertise in economics and entrepreneurship: Dr. Shida Henneberry, professor of agricultural economics and agribusiness, and Dr. Craig Watters, clinical professor of entrepreneurship and interim director of the Riata Center for Entrepreneurship at OSU (**see Attachment 1**). It is expected that 1) EFs, internship mentors, and the named PTMs will exchange ideas and feedback around the Fellows' entrepreneurial ideas; 2) their dialogue would continue, including the drafting of related business plans and market analysis procedures/tools, during the five-week training periods (**see Attachment 3**); 3) EFs would conduct market analyses after returning home, as needed, and continue social media-facilitated dialogues with their internship mentors and the PTMs; 4) EFs would begin implementation of their enterprises; 5) internship mentors and PTMs who travel to the EFs' countries would visit the EFs' enterprises and/or workplaces to provide advice and additional mentoring; and 6) the collaborations established would continue thereafter through the project's social media (**see Attachment 8**). **Administration/Supervision of J-1 Visas and Related Travel Requirements**

The PTMs are prepared to assist the BECA in meeting all requirements governing the

administration of Exchange Visitor Programs as set forth in 22 CFR 62. The J Exchange Visitor

Program is the responsibility of International Students and Scholars (ISS) Office at OSU. OSU has one Responsible Officer (RO) and three Alternate Responsible Officers (AROs). The RO and AROs screen all Exchange Visitor (EV) requests in the student and scholar categories. As part of the project, the essential information will be provided to all EVs and their inviting departments: pre-arrival information to assist with the regulations and compliance for EVs as well as a reminder to the department regarding their obligations to the EVs; orientation program in verbal and written forms; access to cross-cultural events and experiences available on and off campus; and an encouragement of reciprocity throughout the university's departments. In addition, the ISS office ensures OSU adheres to the regulations under 22 CFR 62, which includes monitoring of EVs, reporting a change of address in SEVIS, and verifying health insurance compliance for the EVs and their family members as well as updating ROs and AROs in SEVIS.

ISS administrators keep records of the arrival and departure dates of the EVs and of the EVs who do not arrive on campus. In addition, the ISS office staff completes all annual reporting requirements, which is submitted to the Department of State in July of each year. The ISS office monitors all aspects of the EV program, and the RO/AROs ensure OSU is in compliance.

The *Essential* Role of Internship Experiences and Related Roles/Responsibilities

Adults expect *immediacy of application* from their learning and value learning they deem important in the present or near-term (Knowles, 1990). Kolb (1984) posited that as people experience the world their perceptions are transformed and thereafter guide the selection of new experiences (see Figure 1). And, an individual's "theory of action has not been learned in the most important sense unless it can be put into practice" (Argyris & Schön, 1989, p. 12).

Opportunities for experiential learning and practice, as well as the potential for creating new perceptions or "personal theories" and modifying pre-existing ones, will be powerful tools to support the learning of the EFs as they acquire and practice new professional behaviors and competencies related to economic empowerment. Internship experiences, in particular, if conducted in context-rich settings, offer a valuable venue in which greater understanding and behavioral change occurs. Brown, Collins, and Duguid (1996) described this approach to learning as "cognitive apprenticeship," i.e., learning relying on context and authenticity, which is precisely what effective internship experiences provide.

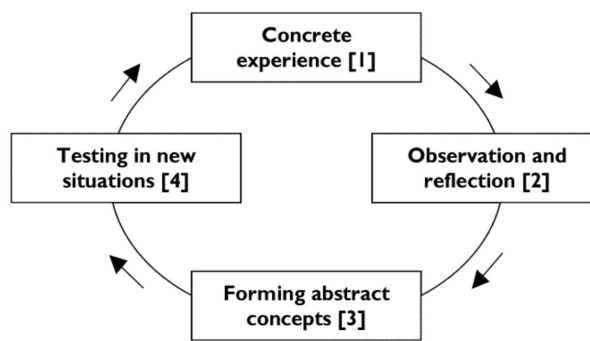


Figure 1. Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle (1984). (Informal Education, 1996,

2005) The EFs will intern in business enterprises, agencies, and with local, county, and state

organizations that support the training and development of aspiring entrepreneurs and business leaders in Oklahoma (see Attachment 2). How these entities stimulate business development and impart entrepreneurial skills will be stressed and modeled.

The EFs will undergo concrete

experiences, collaborate with expert mentors to interpret and reflect on the experiences, abstract

lessons learned toward future experiences, test new theories through active

experimentation, and then apply newly acquired attitudes and knowledge as new

*experiences arise (Kolb, 1984; Informal Education, 1996, 2005). **This portion of the***

project supports the achievement of *output* related objectives, 2, 4, 6, 13, and 16 as

well as *outcome* related objectives 3, 7, 17,

and 18.

The PTMs will monitor the quality of these experiences, including making on-site visits as

well as social media contacts with the EFs and their mentors. OSU's Department of Agricultural

Education, Communications, and Leadership has a long history of successful

internships for its students. Internships are required of all undergraduates. Numerous

potential internship partners

(see **Attachment 2**) already have expressed their willingness to host and mentor the EFs;

additional internship sites are being explored. Moreover, the PTMs have experienced an

excellent working relationship with officials at BECA on past projects, including the project

officer for Africa, Dr. Curt Huff, and intend to collaborate with him and others at BECA in

regard to the final selection of internship sites. Through an orientation meeting with internship

mentors and related communications, the importance of their interacting with the EFs on core

American principles of civic and community engagement will be stressed, e.g.,

participating in activities of the Stillwater Chamber of Commerce and Payne County Extension (see **Attachment 2**). The internship mentors will be invited to all planned cultural outings with the EFs.

Summary of the Project's Monitoring & Evaluation Plan

The project's external evaluator's (see **Attachment 1**) detailed plan, logic model, and sample instruments can be found in **Attachment 6**. The main objective of the evaluation will be

to assess the project's implementation process, outcomes, and impacts from the onset for monitoring and accountability. The process evaluation will answer two questions:

1) Has each of the project implementation steps been completed properly as planned and on time? 2) What can be learned by reviewing the implementation process for

monitoring the overall project?

The outcome and impact evaluation will be based on Kirkpatrick's and Kirkpatrick's (2006) training evaluation model that focuses on four levels of outcomes: 1) satisfaction, 2) learning, 3) practice/behavior changes, and 4) situation improvement or impacts. The evaluation plan will employ pre- and post-test design and use quantitative and qualitative methods to collect valid and reliable data. Survey instruments (**see Attachment 6**), interviews, focus groups, reflections, and observations will be used to collect data and information. Process evaluation data will be reviewed periodically for monitoring the project to achieve the desired results.

The Project's Commitment to and Support of Diversity

The PTMs include diversity of gender, age, race, ethnicity, and professional experience, including two women, one who is an Iranian American, and an African American male (**see Attachment 1**). The project's external evaluator is of Sri Lankan heritage who recently became a U.S. citizen. This inclusion of diversity will be extended to the entities who have indicated their willingness to serve as internship providers for the EFs (**see Attachment 2**). For example, the associate general manager of KOSU, Stillwater's NPR affiliate, is a woman, as are several other mentors, and some of the mentors have Native American heritage.

Oklahoma is unique in that it is home to more than 30 recognized Native American nations (tribes), e.g., the Cherokee and Choctaw are headquartered in the state. Two of the PTMs have a Native American heritage. So, the EFs will have numerous contacts, formal and informal, with Oklahomans of Native American ancestry. They will visit the

Cherokee Nation's national

headquarters and tour Sequoyah's Cabin State Park. The state park in his honor is one of many places where the cultural heritage and contributions of Native Americans is recognized and celebrated in Oklahoma. In past exchanges, the EFs' interactions with Oklahoma's Native American culture resonated deeply with them (George, 2012) regarding their own cultures.

As an example of both geographic diversity and tribal/ethnic diversity, recruiting efforts would target EFs from the North Rift Valley of Kenya. OSU faculty have worked previously with colleagues at Moi University (MU) in Kenya (including an MOU, **see Attachment 9**) to deliver programming to improve the economic livelihoods of Kenyans in that region. Of note, faculty members of OSU's Spears School of Business have mentored business faculty members of MU on their dissertation study proposals for several years and would mentor one or more EFs who are business educators (**see Dr. Federico Aime's letter in Attachment 2**). (MU's agricultural component, including aspects of its agribusiness training, is now Eldoret University [EU]. An EU faculty member assisted PTMs with their last exchange project as a resident facilitator and two MU/EU staff were Fellows; **see related letters of support in Attachment 2**).

The North Rift Valley, as well as other regions of Kenya, is considered as having significantly marginalized populations: poverty is endemic; literacy and higher learning is substantially underdeveloped; wealth-generating resources are scarce; and the provision of state-sponsored assistance has not been distributed equitably (Mwaura, 2005). Capacity-building initiatives designed to work collaboratively with intended

beneficiaries and their advocates are sorely needed (**see related letters of support in Attachment 2**).

Similarly marginalized areas will be recruited from in Uganda, e.g., northern Uganda, and in particular the Acholi and Lango populations, who have suffered from 21 years of civil conflicts. Even though the region has stabilized now, people still suffer from post-conflict issues, including food insecurity and poor economic livelihoods. To that end, a past Food Security Fellow, Mr. Walter Odongo, a faculty member of Agriculture and Environment, Department of Rural Development and Agribusiness, Gulu University, and his institution, have agreed to assist the PTMs in recruiting prospective EFs for this project (**see letter of support in Attachment 2**). South Africa's black townships, e.g., in the Western Cape region (**see UWC's MOU with OSU in Attachment 9**), will also provide similar recruiting grounds.

Along with targeting women participants, the PTMs also intend to recruit disabled Africans as EFs. Multiple organizations representing both groups have provided letters of support for the project (**see Attachment 2**). In the case of Kenya, two groups serving the disabled ("Nambale Disabled" and "Tumaini Women"; **see Attachment 2**) and both involved in business enterprise development, have offered to support the project. The principal of two Ugandan schools serving students with disabilities, including many who are hearing impaired, and the Gulu Deaf Association of Uganda have provided letters of support, as well (**see Attachment 2**). Of note, most OSU facilities are ADA compliant (<http://sds.okstate.edu/>), including some housing units, and disabled accessible vehicles are readily available

through OSU's motor pool as are university buses that serve the campus and the Stillwater community. **The Oklahoma Experience**

Even after almost 20 years, memories of the domestic terrorism action at the Murrah Building in Oklahoma City, which killed 167 innocent Oklahomans, including a number of children, still remains fresh in the PTMs' memories. (The Oklahoma City Bombing Memorial is a destination the EFs will visit.) Accordingly, PTMs understand the need for disparate and unique voices to communicate regardless of social strata, ethnicity, or religion. PTMs embrace the opportunity to interact and collaborate with the EFs such that mutual understandings of other cultures and peoples are enhanced and valued.

Civic engagement opportunities will span from interacting with adult volunteers who advise aspiring agribusiness entrepreneurs (e.g., Payne County 4-H Club members) to experiencing how a moderate-sized, Midwestern city and OSU strive to achieve social cohesion, cooperation, and commerce. Many opportunities to observe and investigate civic responsibility and community involvement, especially activities resonating with economic development and rural vitality, will fill the span of the exchange program. U.S. citizens who travel to Africa as outbound participants will have multiple opportunities to experience the people and cultures of Kenya, South Africa, and Uganda (**see letters of support from past U.S. participants in Attachment 2**).

In learning and sharing with our EFs, we can help open their eyes to what is an essential component of any sustainable society: an integrated education system supporting aspiring entrepreneurs who will be a nation's future business and civic

leaders. This is a fundamental premise on which OSU was founded and remains part of its core mission as a land-grant university in the 21st century. Moreover, PTMs will use their newly enhanced global perspectives and cross-cultural understandings to broaden the education of OSU students and the views of citizens in Oklahoma. The PTMs' public relations efforts were substantial in this regard as the past projects (described above) were promoted and publicized (**see Attachment 9**).

Collaboration with the Public Affairs Sections at the Respective U.S. Embassies

The PTMs will work closely with officials of the Public Affairs Sections (PAS) of the respective U.S. Embassies (**see Attachment 2**) to further develop plans for program implementation and to recruit and select EFs as well as for them to participate actively in the EFs' pre-departure orientations and re-entry seminars (See Budget narrative describing support for these functions.). The PTMs anticipate significant consultations with the Embassies' respective Public Affairs Officers (PAOs) to plan and deliver as strong a program as possible, including their joining the PTMs in visits to the EFs' enterprises or workplaces. The officials will be invited to join in the project's social media forums, e.g., Facebook group, Twitter, and blogs.

When delivering a similar project with Malian journalists during 2006/2007, the PTMs developed a strong working relationship with the PAO at that time from the U.S. Embassy in Mali, Mrs. Stephanie Syptak-Ramnath, and her staff (**see her letter of support in Attachment 2**). Ms. Shannon Dorsey, PAO at the U.S. Embassy in Uganda, who PTMs worked with to deliver a Food Security Fellows' project during 2011/2012, has also provided a letter of support for this proposal (**see Attachment 2**). In addition, the PTMs have received a letter of support/commitment (**see Attachment**

2) from an ICPO in each target country (described above) who will liaise with U.S. Embassy officials on behalf of the project.

Working w/ Officials of the Department of State & Participating in the Fellows Congresses

The PTMs will work closely with officials of DOS, BECA, especially the project officer, Dr.

Curt Huff and/or his designee(s). The PTMs understand completely that the final selection of EFs will be made with full approval of cognizant officials at the DOS and the U.S. Embassies.

Two of the PTMs participated in the inaugural Professional Fellows Congresses in 2011: Drs. Cartmell and Edwards helped with break-out sessions and other activities, and Edwards assisted in developing the Ethiopian case study used by the food security group. They and the other PTMs are committed to participating in teleconferences and/or on-line forums to plan the Congresses for 2014, and two PTMs will attend each Congress. While in Washington, D.C., time will be scheduled for the EFs to tour prominent historical places, especially those resonating with U.S. democracy and citizenship and to visit their Embassies, similar to the PTMs' last exchange.

Plan for Social Media and Project Outreach

Throughout the proposed project, social media will be used by PTMs (1) to communicate among EFs, ICPOs, internship mentors, relevant in-country groups, U.S. Embassy and DOS, BECA officials and (2) to share project news with the public and the news media. The PTMs have used email and Facebook as effective post-grant, follow-on engagement tools to continue working with alumni and others from previous

exchange projects. Many letters of support (**see Attachment 2**) in this proposal speak directly to the effectiveness of this on-going dialogue and mentorship. The PTMs will continue to use both tools in the proposed project to solicit quality fellowship applicants and to expand this project's impact. In addition, the PTMs will employ a variety of social media to reach a diverse domestic and international demographic in a number of progressive ways, including Facebook, Twitter, blogs, LinkedIn, Skype, Instagram, Dropbox, and DOS-sponsored ExchangesConnect and State Alumni platforms (**see Attachment 8**).

Budget & Budget Oversight

Form SF-424A provides information regarding the budget. The detailed budget, budget narrative and budget summary, including breakouts of the administrative budget and program budget, have been provided (**see Attachment 10**). Dr. Dwayne Cartmell II, a PTM, working closely with the project's Graduate Associate, will provide budget oversight as he did for two previous DOS, BECA-funded projects. He will be backstopped by staff of DASNR's Sponsored Programs Office and by OSU's Office of Vice President for Research and Technology Transfer.

Acknowledging the Department of State, BECA's Financial Support

The PTMs will acknowledge BECA's financial support and use the DOS's seal, when possible, on any literature, recruitment pieces, media, and scholarship created as a result of this project. Examples of promotional pieces from the PTMs' previously funded DOS, BECA projects can be found in **Attachment 9**.

APPENDIX B
APPLICATION

U.S. Department of State
Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs
Professional Exchanges Program

**Empowering Aspiring Entrepreneurs for Economic Success in Sub-Saharan Africa:
A Professional Fellows Program for Kenya, South Africa, and Uganda**

Funded by the U.S. Department of State, this project seeks to establish and stimulate professional collaborations and learning experiences between mid-level, emerging entrepreneurs (approx. 25 to 40 years of age) from the countries of Kenya, South Africa, and Uganda. The program's focus is entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial development with the intent to include members of marginalized groups such as women and the disabled. A focus of the U.S. program would be the selected Fellows undergoing internship experiences appropriate for their professional roles and aspirations.

By completing the application below, you are applying to be a Department of State Fellow for this project and understand that you will travel to the U.S. for a five-week program beginning in early May 2014 and ending in early June 2014. The information sought below will be used to complete a DS-2019 for a J visa to come to the U.S. should you be selected and approved for this opportunity. This information is requested by the U.S. Department of State. Note: All information provided, where applicable, must match that which is found on your official passport.

Please submit a scanned copy of your passport information page and your résumé with this document. Those applicants selected for further consideration may be contacted to schedule a face-to-face interview with in-country partners and a Skype interview with U.S. team members.

Applications should be emailed to brentney.maroney@okstate.edu no later than **December 1, 2013**.

1. Family/Last Name:
2. First Name:
3. Middle Name:
4. E-mail Address:
4. Home Address:
5. Cell Phone Number:
6. Month of Birth:
7. Day of Birth:
8. Year of Birth:
9. City/Town/Village of Birth:
10. Country of Birth:
11. Country of Current Citizenship:
12. Country of Legal Permanent Residence:

13. City of Visa Interview (where the U.S. Embassy or Consulate is located in your country):

14. Languages Spoken:

15. Gender:

16. Do you have regular and dependable Internet access?

17. Your Current Employer:

18. Employer's Business Address:

19. Your Job Title:

20. What are your responsibilities in your current job?

21. What are your professional/career interests?

22. What is your educational background and training related to your current professional position?

23. How will this experience help you grow professionally in your current career path?

24. Where/what professionally would you like to be in 10 years?

25. What are your entrepreneurial/business enterprise aspirations?

26. Have you ever been to the United State? If yes, for what purpose did you travel to the U.S.?

27. Based on the provided information, can you meet travel requirements to obtain a Visa?

28. Are you available for travel to the United States between May 1, 2014, to June 7, 2014?

29. Would you be willing to share a room with one of your fellow project participants?

30. Do you smoke?

31. In essay form (3 to 5 paragraphs), please describe an idea for an entrepreneurial/business enterprise project you are either doing presently or considering doing in the future. Please address any enterprise projects in which you are currently (or will be) involved that deal with **any** of the following areas:

- . Cost/benefit analysis, present value estimations
- . Project evaluation
- . Economic profitability studies and projections
- . Project management
- . Marketing strategies
- . Market development and commodity promotion activities
- . Alternative (to traditional) marketing channels
- . Other related areas

APPENDIX C
ACCEPTANCE LETTER



Oklahoma State University

Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources
Department of Agricultural Education, Communications
and Leadership
448 Agricultural Hall
Stillwater, Oklahoma 74078
405-744-8036; Fax 405-744-5176

February 19, 2014

Consular Section
United States Embassy
Nairobi, Kenya

RE: Letter of introduction for visa applicants (Kariuki, Nathan Mwangi; Mburugu, Christine Kendi; Owora, Anita Camilla Wanjiru Akinyi; and, Wang'ombe, Robert Kariuki) supporting their participation in Oklahoma State University's Empowering Entrepreneurs' project: S-ECAGD-13-GR-189(CB)

Dear Consular:

The person presenting this letter, as one of the four individuals named above, has been selected from a pool of 117 Kenyan applicants to participate in the Professional Fellows Program being directed by faculty members of Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, USA. The full name of this Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs-sponsored project is "Empowering Aspiring Entrepreneurs for Economic Success in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Professional Fellows Program for Kenya, South Africa, and Uganda."

The project's broad aim is to create professional collaborations and learning experiences between mid-level, emerging entrepreneurs from Kenya, South Africa, and Uganda and U.S. entrepreneurs as part of a two-way exchange program. The project's focus is entrepreneurship development with the intent to include marginalized groups. Multiple opportunities for enhanced learning and cross-cultural understanding of U.S. citizens also will be emphasized. Six goals guide the project ranging from training leading to the Fellows acquiring entrepreneurial skills and attitudes to creating collaborations supporting their success with enterprise projects while sustaining U.S. mentor contacts through social media.

The participants are expected to arrive in the United States on or about May 1, 2014 and depart for home on June 7, 2014. The first four weeks of the five-week program will take place in Oklahoma and includes a three-week internship experience related to the Fellows' entrepreneurial interests. They will attend a Professional Fellows Congress in Washington, DC, as sponsored by the U.S. Department of State, during the final week of the program.

Thank you very much for assisting our selected participants with the visa application process. If you have any questions about our project, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Craig Edwards".

M. Craig Edwards
Project Co-director
Professor & Coordinator of Graduate Studies
(O) 405.744.8141
E-mail: craig.edwards@okstate.edu

APPENDIX D

EXAMPLE LETTER TO POTENTIAL INTERNSHIP HOSTS

Assistance with grant project

Hi, XXXX.

My colleagues and I have an international grant project funded by the U.S. Department of State that will bring 12 African entrepreneurs to Oklahoma in May. As a part of this project, each of these individuals is to participate in a job shadowing / educational experience with a U.S. mentor in the same entrepreneurial area. Of those, one (Name of Fellow) is interested in exploring ways to develop youth in agriculture in her country of South Africa. Her attached application outlines her background and interests.

I am seeking mentors for her during her three-week job shadowing (weekdays only from May 12 through May. 30. Would any of you (or someone in your office) be interested in hosting her? Hosting her involves having her spend the day(s) with you to ask questions, learn about your involvement with youth and agriculture, etc. to help ensure she learns about her interest area to help her improve her business when she returns to Africa.

We will provide her with housing, transportation and meals, so the mentors have no financial obligations, only the sharing of their expertise to help an entrepreneur from a developing country. We would sincerely appreciate your participation in this project. We know this direct request is unexpected, and we would welcome the opportunity to discuss additional details with you in person.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Thanks,
Shelly

Shelly Peper Sitton, Ph.D.
Professor of Agricultural Communications
Oklahoma State University
shelly.sitton@okstate.ed

APPENDIX E

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Date: Monday, April 21, 2014
IRB Application No #Type!
Proposal Title: Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs African Entrepreneur Project
Reviewed and Processed as: Exempt

Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved Protocol Expires: 4/20/2017

Principal Investigator(s):

Brentney Maroney
456 Ag Hall
Stillwater, OK 74078

Dwayne Cartmell
448 Ag Hall
Stillwater, OK 74078

The IRB application referenced above has been approved. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in section 45 CFR 46.

☒ The final versions of any printed recruitment, consent and assent documents bearing the IRB approval stamp are attached to this letter. These are the versions that must be used during the study.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:

1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol must be submitted with the appropriate signatures for IRB approval. Protocol modifications requiring approval may include changes to the title, PI advisor, funding status or sponsor, subject population composition or size, recruitment, inclusion/exclusion criteria, research site, research procedures and consent/assent process or forms
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period. This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3. Report any adverse events to the IRB Chair promptly. Adverse events are those which are unanticipated and impact the subjects during the course of the research; and
4. Notify the IRB office in writing when your research project is complete.

Please note that approved protocols are subject to monitoring by the IRB and that the IRB office has the authority to inspect research records associated with this protocol at any time. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact Dawnett Watkins 219 Cordell North (phone: 405-744-5700, dawnett.watkins@okstate.edu).

Sincerely,


Shelia Kennison, Chair
Institutional Review Board

Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Date: Monday, September 22, 2014 Protocol Expires: 4/20/2017
IRB Application No: AG1425
Proposal Title: Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs African Entrepreneur Project

Reviewed and Exempt
Processed as: **Modification**

Status Recommended by Reviewer(s) **Approved**

Principal
Investigator(s):

Brentney Maroney	Dwayne Cartmell
456 Ag Hall	448 Ag Hall
Stillwater, OK 74078	Stillwater, OK 74078

The requested modification to this IRB protocol has been approved. Please note that the original expiration date of the protocol has not changed. The IRB office **MUST** be notified in writing when a project is complete. All approved projects are subject to monitoring by the IRB.

- ☒ The final versions of any printed recruitment, consent and assent documents bearing the IRB approval stamp are attached to this letter. These are the versions that must be used during the study.

The reviewer(s) had these comments:

Modification to 1) send emails to those who participated in the survey in April and request a Skype interview and 2) to conduct Skype interviews.

Signature :



Hugh Crethar, Chair, Institutional Review Board

Monday, September 22, 2014
Date

APPENDIX F

SCRIPT

OSU Entrepreneur Survey

Dear African Entrepreneur Fellow,

I need your help! As a master's student in agricultural communications and a research assistant for the Professional Fellows Program, I have an interest in your perceptions of new media and how it is currently used. New media has become an essential tool in the development of enterprises around the world. However, there is little research representing how new media has affected and impacted the entrepreneurs in developing countries. I am working on a research project that will help determine the overall new media use in the development of enterprises in entrepreneurial enterprises in your countries of Kenya, Uganda and South Africa. With your assistance, the data collected will help agricultural communicators, as well as industry professionals better understand your perceptions, thoughts and uses of new media.

The link below will take you to a short questionnaire regarding your personal use and perceptions of social media. This questionnaire will take approximately 5-10 minutes to complete. Your assistance with this research is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions regarding the questionnaire or the research it supports, do not hesitate to contact me at the e-mail address provided below.

https://okstatecasnr.az1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_4Z3EFGbiw0IsDd3

Best wishes,

Brentney Maroney

Agricultural Communications Researcher

brentney.maroney@okstate.edu

Reminder E-mail for Entrepreneur Survey:

Dear African Entrepreneur Fellow,

I am sending this note as a reminder that I need your help! Earlier this week I sent you the following message:

I need your help! As a master's student in agricultural communications and a research assistant for the Professional Fellows Program, I have an interest in your perceptions of new media and how it is currently used. New media has become an essential tool in the development of enterprises around the world. However, there is little research representing how new media has affected and impacted the entrepreneurs in developing countries. I am working on a research project that will help determine the overall new media use in the development of enterprises in entrepreneurial enterprises in your countries of Kenya, Uganda and South Africa. With your assistance, the data collected will help agricultural communicators, as well as industry professionals better understand your perceptions, thoughts and uses of new media.

This online questionnaire is only available for a short time, so please don't wait! In just 5-10 minutes, you could provide information that will help this research be a success.

To access the questionnaire, simply click the link at the bottom of the page. If you have any questions regarding the questionnaire or the research it supports, don't hesitate to contact me at the e-mail address provided below. Thank you in advance for your time and participation!

https://okstatecasnr.az1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_4Z3EFGbiw0lsDd3

Best wishes,

Brentney Maroney

Agricultural Communications Researcher

brentney.maroney@okstate.edu

E-mail Request for Interview

Dear African Entrepreneurial Fellow,

Greetings from Oklahoma State University!

I need your help! As I am continuing to work on my master's research in agricultural communications and specializing in the Professional Fellows Program, I am working to help determine the overall new media use in the development of entrepreneurial enterprises in your countries of Kenya, Uganda and South Africa based on the Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs project. With your assistance, the data collected will help agricultural communicators, as well as industry professionals better understand your perceptions, thoughts and uses of new media.

I am asking for your assistance in participating in an online interview via Skype. The interview will take approximately 20-30 minutes to complete. Please respond with a date and time that is convenient for you to participate in the interview, within the time frame mentioned below. Your assistance with this research is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions regarding the interview or the research it supports, do not hesitate to contact me at the e-mail address provided below.

Best wishes,

Brentney Maroney

Agricultural Communications Researcher

brentney.maroney@okstate.edu

Dates and times to conduct online Skype interview:

October 13-16

Between 4 p.m. and 8 p.m. (EAT)

Reminder E-mail for Interview

Dear African Entrepreneurial Fellow,

I am sending this note as a reminder that I need your help! Last week I sent you the following message:

I need your help! As I am continuing to work on my master's research in agricultural communications and specializing in the Professional Fellows Program, I am working to help determine the overall new media use in the development of entrepreneurial enterprises in your countries of Kenya, Uganda and South Africa based on the Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs project. With your assistance, the data collected will help agricultural communicators, as well as industry professionals better understand your perceptions, thoughts and uses of new media.

Please respond with a date and time that is convenient for you to participate in the interview, within the time frame mentioned below. Your assistance with this research is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions regarding the interview or the research it supports, do not hesitate to contact me at the e-mail address provided below. Thank you in advance for your time and participation!

Best wishes,

Brentney Maroney

Agricultural Communications Researcher

brentney.maroney@okstate.edu

Dates and times to conduct online Skype interview:

October 13-16

Between 4 p.m. and 8 p.m. (EAT)

APPENDIX G

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Qualtrics Survey Software

<https://az1.qualtrics.com/ControlPanel/Ajax.php?action=GetSu...>

Block 1

Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs African Entrepreneur Project

Directions: Please read to the bottom of these instructions. This web page is intended to provide you with a summary of this research study. It will also provide what is expected of you as a participant and your rights as a participant. After you have read to the bottom of this page, you must enter your e-mail address to continue to the survey. If you have any questions concerning this study, please e-mail your questions to brentney.maroney@okstate.edu. Thank you for your time!

PURPOSE:

New media has become an essential tool in the development of enterprises around the world. However, there is little research representing how new media has affected and impacted the entrepreneurs in developing countries. The purpose of this study is to determine the overall new media use in the development of enterprises in the countries of Kenya, Uganda and South Africa. This research will determine the perceptions of entrepreneurs and the intent to use new media during and following the Department of State's Bureau of Educational & Cultural Affairs exchange program.

PROCEDURES:

This research study will involve one questionnaire. The first section of the questionnaire will ask for demographic information. This includes information such as your gender, age, and country of residence. The second part of the questionnaire will be based on your perceptions and current uses of new media. This study is designed only to last a week. If at any time you do not want to continue on with this study, you may end your participation without explanation.

RISKS OF PARTICIPATION:

This research study does not involve risks that are associated with stress, psychological, social or physical risk. However, if you begin to experience any type of stress during this study, you may end your participation at any time.

BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION:

Although there are no expected personal benefits from you participating in this study, this research will contribute to the knowledge known about new media perceptions in developing countries. By conducting this research study, there will be identification as to the perceptions and uses of new media, current views of new media with business enterprises and desired uses of new media following the exchange project. Therefore, future research will have the steps necessary to conduct an informative study.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

The information provided by you will at all times be kept confidential, and no information will be released. Research records will be securely stored on a password-protected computer in Ag Hall, and only the researchers or individuals responsible for this study will have access to records. Results from this study may be used in publications, but you will NOT be identified individually. This data will only be saved as long as it is scientifically useful.

CONTACTS:

Throughout the duration of this study, you may contact any of the following researchers to discuss your participation and request information about the results of the study: Ms. Brentney Maroney, Student Graduate Assistant, 456 AGH, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK 74078, (405) 744-8251, brentney.maroney@okstate.edu; Dr. Dwayne Cartmell, Dept. of Agricultural Education, Communications and Leadership, Oklahoma State University, 436 Agricultural Hall, 405-744-0461, dwayne.cartmell@okstate.edu.

If you have questions about your rights as a research volunteer, you may contact Dawnett Watkins, IRB Manager, 217 Cordell North, Stillwater, OK 74078, 405-744-5700 or irb@okstate.edu.

PARTICIPANTS RIGHTS:

There will be no penalty for refusal to participate in this study, and you are free to withdraw from your participation in this project at any time. Your participation in this research is voluntary.

By putting your e-mail address in the box below, you have been informed about all of the procedures listed. You are also informed of what you will be asked to do and the benefits of your participation.

If you decide not to participate in this study, please close your Web browser at this time.

APPENDIX H

QUESTIONNAIRE

Qualtrics Survey Software

<https://az1.qualtrics.com/ControlPanel/Ajax.php?action=GetSu...>

E-MAIL ADDRESS:

Demographic Questions

What is your sex?

- ☐ Male
☐ Female

What is your age?

What is your country of residence?

- ☐ Kenya
☐ South Africa
☐ Uganda

Do you currently use new media platforms? (ex. Twitter, Facebook, Flickr, Instagram, LinkedIn etc.)

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

If no, what is the primary reason you do not use new media platforms?

- ☐ I do not have enough time.
☐ I receive information from other sources.
☐ I do not know how to use it.
☐ I do not see a purpose for using it.
☐ Other. Please explain

If yes, which of the following new media platforms are you currently using? Check all that apply.

- ☐ Facebook
☐ LinkedIn
☐ Twitter
☐ Flickr
☐ Instagram
☐ YouTube
☐ Pinterest
☐ Skype
☐ Other. Please explain

How often do you use each of these new media platforms?

	Always	Often	Occasionally	Never	I have never heard of this new media platform
Facebook	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
LinkedIn	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Twitter	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Flickr	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Instagram	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
YouTube	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pinterest	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Skype	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

On average, how many hours each week do you spend on new media platforms?**Do you ever interact with others on new media platforms? For example, do you ever "like," "comment," or "share" posts?**

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

You indicated you interact with others on new media platforms. What urges you to interact? Check all that apply.

- ☐ I interact when an opportunity exists to learn new information.
☐ I interact when content relates to personal experience.
☐ I interact with potential customers.
☐ Other. Please explain.

You indicated you do not interact with others on new media platforms. For what primary reason do you choose not to interact? Check all that apply.

- ☐ I do not have enough time.
☐ I do not see a purpose.
☐ I prefer to observe only.
☐ Other. Please explain.

How do you use new media platforms? Please rank the following in order of importance to you with 1 being the highest and 5 being the lowest.

- Connecting with family & friends.
- Marketing my business.
- Connecting with companies.
- Finding business-related information.
- Shopping or searching for special offers.

Why did you decide to use new media platforms? Please explain your answer.

APPENDIX I

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview questions for Fellows

What social media sites and tools are you currently using in your enterprise, if any?

- If no, then why?

Of the largest social media sites, which do you use most frequently? Please explain why.

Were any of these social media outlets adopted after your visit to the U.S.?

- If yes, which outlets?
- If no, why not?

What were your business's marketing strategies, prior to using social media?

What trends have you noticed since your implementation of social media?

What challenges have you faced with the adoption of social media in your enterprise?

Gives examples of effective ways you use social media in your enterprise?

Is someone in your enterprise other than yourself responsible for your social media posting?

- If yes, what is their position?
- If no, are you considering hiring someone in the future?

What do you hope to accomplish in your enterprise with the implementation of social media?

Questions regarding entrepreneurs experience in the U.S.

Which classroom experiences/discussions were most beneficial to you? Why?

Of the different cultural experiences, which was the most beneficial during your time in Oklahoma? Why?

What did you find most beneficial during your internship experience or experiences?

Overall, what were your most impacting moments while you were visiting the U.S.?

VITA

Brentney Danyel Maroney

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: PERCEPTIONS OF NEW MEDIA USE BY ASPIRING ENTREPRENEURS
FROM KENYA, SOUTH AFRICA AND UGANDA

Major Field: Agricultural Communications

Biographical:

Education:

Completed the requirements for the Master of Science in Agricultural
Communications at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in May,
2015.

Completed the requirements for the Bachelor of Science in your Agricultural
Communications at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in 2013.

Experience:

Project Graduate Assistant in Agricultural Communications at Oklahoma
State University from September 2013 – May 2015